A THRILLING SERIAL STORY FOR BOYS BY WILL LISENBEE, NEXT WEEK

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LOVE'S GUILTY DREAM;

OR

THE IDOL OF THE REGIMENT.

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CHAPTER I.

THE GHOSTS.

The night was warm, almost sultry. The moon flooded the landscape with her weird light, giving to each familiar object an unearthly aspect. The Castle du Terrail, its massive towers outlined against the dark azure of the sky, stood in bold relief against the dusky forms of the trees in the park.

Tonight the many windows of the eastern and central portions of the edifice were resplendent with light, while from the open windows floated the dreamy strains of a waltz. The cause of this unusual gaiety was the return to his old home near Chalons, after a long wedding tour, of the Marquis du Terrail and his beautiful bride, Marie de Mieux, two of the oldest names in France.

Walking down the graveled avenue which led to the castle were two women, the subject of their conversation and the pleasure of being together again having more attraction for them than the gay scene in the brightly lighted parlors. The one speaking was the Marquise herself, while her companion was her old friend and schoolmate, Mademoiselle Irene D'Orban.

"You see, Irene," she was saying in her slow, high-bred tones, from which nothing seemed to have the power to make her depart, "I am tired of all these balls, parties and receptions, which during our tour abroad we were compelled to attend every night. I had hoped that upon our return some quiet might come to my life. In this I was mistaken, for the demands of society are such that we are not granted one moment of repose. I am carried away in this flood of social gaiety, like a leaf on the bosom of a turbulent river. When I seek refuge in some quiet eddy a wave passes by and, tearing me from my retreat, casts me anew amid the struggles of the rapidly flowing stream."

She gave a tired sigh and continued: "You, amid all these pleasures I find more alone, more weary, than I should in the repose of my own chamber, with only a few friends to make demands on my time and attention."

"Ah, I see what troubles you, Marie," laughed her friend. "You are selfish in your happiness and do not want others to share it. But I assure you that you have no right to be jealous, for the Marquis du Terrail is the most lover-like of husbands. Why, he pays more attention to you than to any other woman, and Raoul tells me that is something unusual."

"Oh, I am not jealous," replied Marie. "That is not what I mean, only it seems that I am tired of everything."

"Even of your husband," remarked Irene in her clear, loud voice so different from her companion's low, listless accents.

It was not by the voice alone that they differed. Irene's brisk, uneven gestures, her boyish independence of manner, the roguish expression of face, were the opposite of Marie's graceful movements, her weak, subdued nature and her lily-defined features.

The Marquise du Terrail looked up with a startled glance; but the happy, saucy face did not second the doubt so carelessly expressed and reassured. Marie resumed her tranquility as she asked:

"What makes you say such a thing?"

"Oh, nothing, dear; don't mind what I say, for in truth what can I, raised amid my brother's soldiers, know of love among noble ladies and gentlemen? Only it seems to me that in your place I would act differently."

"How would you act, Irene?"

"I don't know exactly, but it seems to me that I would not move away when my husband comes up to me. I would not shudder when he took my hand, nor look at him as though he were a snake, or some dangerous beast, to be suffered but not trusted."

"But I surely don't act like that!" broke in the Marquise, with genuine terror in her tones.

Irene laughed, and, taking pity on her friend's emotion, replied gaily:

"There, don't be frightened, Marie, and never mind what I say; for, as you know, little Irene, the daughter of the regiment, the boy-girl, does like to tease her friends, especially if they happen to be good like you. Why, your conduct is so perfect that even my chaperon, the Duchesse de LaMotte, has nothing to say against it."

Marie drew a sigh of relief and was about to resume the conversation when Irene, pointing to the left wing, one window of which was lighted, showing two persons entwined in each other's arms, exclaimed:

"Look up there, Marie, at the western wing, and see those lovers enjoying a pleasant chat. Whose room is that?"

Marie did not answer, for she seemed to have been struck with paralysis. With her eyes enlarged by terror and her hands holding to Irene's arm for support, she stood motionless, livid, wild. The terror, which for a time had left her without strength, increasing still more, now returned to her limbs the power of motion, and pulling Irene after her she rushed madly away, crying as she ran:

"Come away! For the love of Heaven, hasten! Run, run faster, Irene!"

Though not understanding the cause of this sudden retreat, Irene nevertheless followed her friend in her mad career through the park. At last Marie paused, and leaning against a tree to save herself from falling, murmured:

"Oh, I did see them after all!"

Irene stood looking at her friend in wonder, then, when she saw that the Marquise was more collected, she remarked:

"I hope you will explain the cause of our sudden flight. I assure you that if I was not a soldier at heart, as I am in manner, I would have been struck with terror, not at those poor lovers, but at the effect their appearance produced upon you. I should like to know what you saw in them to so frighten you."

Marie's breath came fast between her livid lips and in this terror-stricken woman it would have been impossible to recognize the listless, well-bred lady of an instant before. She crept about her questioning companion, advancing to Irene, said in tones so low as to be scarcely audible:

"Those figures you saw by the window were not living creatures, but ghosts!"

Irene started back and looked at her friend as though doubtful of her reason; but when she saw that Madame du Terrail was in earnest, she burst into such peals of laughter that the startled echoes, seeking to answer, only brought back a mocking sneer which caused Marie to shiver anew.

"Ghosts, Marie! You surely do not mean to tell me you believe in such nonsense."

"Oh, but I do, and as you would, if you lived long in this house," was the still terrified reply. "The west wing is haunted and Pierre, brave as he is, has been forced to acknowledge that he has seen figures like those he saw tonight; and upon rushing into the apartment he found it empty, and, only the sound of retreating footsteps reached his ear, and though every nook and corner of the rooms were searched, no one was ever found. All this was told me by the butler who had been in the house before the late Marquise du Terrail was found dead by her own hand in the apartment which is now occupied by the Count and husband."

"Ah! I see," said Irene with an amused smile as she looked at her credulous friend, "there is a tragedy on which your ghost story has been founded. Come, tell it to me, for you have aroused my curiosity."

She led Marie to a rustic bench near by, and when they were seated once more demanded an explanation. Marie hesitated for a few moments, then in low, uneven tones she began:

"Five years ago, the Marquise du Terrail, my husband's mother, was found dead in her apartment, a deep gash cut in the throat, cutting the jugular vein having produced death. In her hands she still held the razor that had done the deed.

"That night when her husband returned from a visit to a friend, he went, as was his habit, to bid good-night to his wife, and was surprised to find the room in complete darkness. He called his wife and, not receiving an answer, was going to the mantel to strike a light when he stumbled over a body outstretched upon the carpet. He stooped and discovered his wife's body

bathed in her own blood. His cries soon brought the servants with lights. The Marquise was dead and on the mantel was a note stating the cause. It simply contained the words:

"You were false, so I die.—Mathilde."

"What it so, Marie—had he been false?" questioned Irene, deeply interested by the story.

"That I do not know, but the Marquis never got over the shock, and a few months later he was found dying, having taken an overdose of opium. A short time after the ghost was seen at the haunted window. At first Pierre refused to believe the servants' story, and, being in quiet their door he offered to spend the night in the haunted chamber. All went well until about midnight, when the whole house was aroused by the Marquis' cries, and he was seen in his nightclothes rushing wildly down the stairs. He has never entered the room since that time, and even now when he speaks of it his emotion is so great that he can hardly talk."

"Did you ever ask him what he saw that night?"

"Yes, once, but he answered that, wishing me to spend the summer at the castle, he did not care to tell me what he saw during that hour of horror."

"Irene's smile had changed into a frown, while her whole manner indicated that she was deeply absorbed in thought. Suddenly she was startled by her friend's voice calling in the distance:

"Marie, Marie, where are you?"

"My mother," cried the Marquise, as she sprang to her feet. "Irene, what I have just told you must remain a secret. Only Pierre does not what to speak of the ghosts to any one."

"He is afraid people with comon sense will tell you there are none," thought Irene, as her friend disappeared in search of her.

A few minutes later the Marquis du Terrail had joined the ladies.

"Really, Marie, you merit a scolding," he said reproachfully, "to wander in the rain. It is true, but there is a dampness in the dew which is extremely unhealthy. Mademoiselle D'Oban, I respectfully beg that you and my complice in such a mad escapade."

Irene laughed. The latter replied: "Your words, Marquis, show that you don't know my character. For the more daring, the more reasonable an 'escapade,' as you say, the better I like it, and the more willing am I to join it."

While talking they had walked back to the castle, the warm lighting of which now dark and silent. During the rest of the evening Irene's dark eyes scarcely left the Marquis' face, and when she retired to her apartment she murmured:

"He does not look a man who might believe in ghosts. There is a mystery and I cannot rest until I have solved it."

CHAPTER II.

A WEAK WOMAN'S HEART.

Before proceeding further it is necessary to see how the Marquise de Mieux became Marquise du Terrail.

George de Mieux was a man with an iron will and a heart of stone, and having made up his mind to a thing, no matter if this decision was to ruin a life or break a heart, it must be obeyed. Thus when the Marquis du Terrail asked him for his daughter's hand, without even thinking that Marie might refuse, the choice of a husband, he answered yes.

"But are you sure Mademoiselle de Mieux will accept?" had objected the lover, who feared that the hope given him by the father might be withdrawn should he ask the daughter.

"De Mieux looked up with an expression of wonder on his cold, proud face, and answered coldly:

"My daughter, sir, will approve of whatever choice I may make."

"But will you see Mademoiselle de Mieux will accept?" had objected the lover, who feared that the hope given him by the father might be withdrawn should he ask the daughter.

"De Mieux looked up with an expression of wonder on his cold, proud face, and answered coldly:

"My daughter, sir, will approve of whatever choice I may make."

"But will you see me?"

"Once more a look of surprise and scorn passed over the haughty features, then the man replied:

"Before marriage, girls who have seen so little of the world as Mademoiselle de Mieux are not capable of understanding the meaning of love. You desire to marry my daughter, and if you desire it, try to win her heart. But believe me, a marriage with people of our rank, the last thing to be considered is love. One can live more comfortably without it. In choosing a husband I am sure you will see that she is well bred, refined in taste, of noble birth and wealth. You will make a desirable hostess to receive your guests and a fit mother to educate your children. When I married Mlle. Therese de Mieux I had never thought to ask her if she loved me. I simply made a most excellent match and filled the position. I asked for her hand; it was granted me, and until her death we lived very comfortably."

But the stern old man did not know that what he called the cold, dry, legal contract had been this very lack of affection, which to his proud, selfish nature had always been part of such secondary order.

The Marquis du Terrail differed with the Comte de Mieux, but seeing how useless it would be to argue the subject, he simply said, as he rose to take his departure:

"I will call again tomorrow afternoon to hear the decision de Mieux's decision, for I do not wish her to be forced into a marriage with me, if she should prove distasteful to her."

"I would never compel her to marry you if she had any reason for not wishing to do so," was de Mieux's reply.

After the Marquis' departure the old Comte summoned his daughter. Marie was then a girl of eighteen, with a pretty, childish face, which by its lily-defined lines showed lack of character and a weak and yielding nature. The first thing to strike the observer was the unusual contrast of the gold of her hair and the dark, velvety beauty of her eyes.

Used from early childhood to bow beneath the iron rod of her father's authority, she had developed a weak, timorous nature, which could be swayed by any strong will. At the convent where most of her life had been spent she was popular because she never had any wishes and never rebelled against the will of others. Among her many friends Marie loved but one—the saucy, bright Irene D'Oban, the opposite in every respect. Marie's weakness was replaced in Irene by a virile strength of character, yet in spite of this contrast—maybe because of it—there sprang up between the two girls a friendship and tenderness more of passionate, so rarely existing between women.

In their convent home a stone angel spoke of her brother, the handsome, soldierly man who came so often to visit her. Marie had this image constantly before her, and kept in its parlor with his sister; this, together with Irene's words of pride and her stories about his courage, had caused Marie's solitude to be peopled with a hero, "the god of her youthful imagination. In her dreams of lovers and of marriage, he always was the principal, important role. At the mention of his name the warm blood would dye her cheeks as her heart gave she ordered hounds in her bosom. But of this love she spoke to no one, and maybe in her innocence she did not know of its existence. Yet with all the passion her weak nature was capable of feeling, Marie loved Chevalier Raoul D'Oban, who was almost twenty years her senior.

When she entered her father's study Marie's eyes were reddened by recent weeping, for she had just received a note from Irene, saying that Raoul's regiment was ordered to Montenegro and that he was going with him. The thought of the separation from her friend, the sorrow at the sudden unbending voice. "But it was not to criticise Irene's conduct that he had summoned. The Marquis du Terrail has just left, and he has done us the honor of soliciting your hand in marriage. He has spoken to me to add that I have consented. The Marquis is a gentleman of high birth and wealth and you, I hope you will be pleasant to him, for I have accepted him as your husband over your loves. That is all I wish to tell you; you may retire," and with a wave of his hand the stern old man dismissed his daughter, taking the "Figaro," began to read.

But Marie did not leave. She did not move. Her frightened eyes looked at the stern, proud face before her, made harsher and cruel by the crude light which fell upon it, and as she looked her failing heart told her that she had been married, sold by this unfeeling old man who for so long had been her master. Then, with the love of a weak nature for whom she not only did not feel any affection, but whose presence always called forth a timid, unreasoning fear.

And there she stood, afraid to act, yet afraid to accept. Should she tell him she loved another? Would she allow a lovestory, a girlish attachment to have between them an indestructible barrier? That one thought had the power to give her failing courage, and she spoke:

"Father," she called in a voice which, in spite of her efforts, trembled with fear. The Comte looked up, a slight surprise expressed on his features. "Your will, sir, I thought you had retired. What do you want? Some money? What is the amount? Here, write it down," and he drew a checkbook.

But the voice the girl replied, as over her face stole a pleading look: "Father, it is not money that I desire, but something far more precious. I never have as the Marquis du Terrail's wife, for I don't love him and I never will. Father, I love you, and you will not force me to marry him," and Marie, with hands clasped, knelt at her father's feet, such a look of terror, despair and supplication that for a time the old Comte was at a loss as to what to do. The sight of pleading of the part of his daughter, who until now had been to him a child, filled him with confusion.

When he had somewhat recovered from his surprise de Mieux said in accents more resolute, more unbending, than ever:

"What nonsense is this? I was thinking you were old enough to stop. A few minutes ago I was congratulating you that you had been weeping; now when you are offered the oldest name in France, with a husband who loves you, and who is worthy a queen's hand, you plead to be saved from such a union, as though a husband I could find another girl in France who would not be proud to be chosen as the wife of the Marquis du Terrail. What is there in this union which is distasteful to you? Is it that I was, perhaps, overestimating in intelligence? Is he not a perfect gentleman, with none of the curses of vices which are so common? Speak, girl—out—what have you to say against him?"

Had Marie been a woman she would have kindly tone of voice, had the man who ordered them been less stern, less cold and indifferent to her sentiments of the heart, they might have drawn from Marie the secret of her love for Raoul, but the girl only frightened her the more, causing the confession to remain unspoken, and in a trembling voice she replied, one poor soul. In a voice to which emotion gave an unnatural tone, she answered:

"I have nothing to say against the Marquis du Terrail, only that I do not love him. Have you love some one else?" he questioned, in the same icy tones.

Marie hesitated. Once more she looked at him, her lips moved, but the words they framed were not audible. Her face fallen her at the decisive moment, and no one was there to whisper in her ear that it would be better to weather the storm than to wait until a tempest must be faced—a tempest in which her weak soul would sink. So with bowed head and colorless lips she answered coldly:

"I love no one."

De Mieux heaved a sigh of relief. One moment he had feared that such was the cause of her refusal, but now that he was reassured on this important point, he said coldly:

"Then, after a few months' marriage, you will love your husband. That is the way with most girls; they foolishly believe that it is necessary to love the man they marry. Let me assure you that over three-fourths of all the marriages in the world are what you romantic maidens would term loveless unions. But enough: I have discussed this matter of marriage far more fully than I intended in the first place. I have chosen for Terrail, and he and no other shall be your husband. These are my last words. You may retire."

Mlle. Marie retired, alas! without telling her stern father the true reason of her refusal to accept the Marquis du Terrail. The day when Pierre du Terrail called, she greeted him with a cool bow, saying she preferred her father's choice. Two months later Marie de Mieux became Marquise du Terrail, and the wife of a man she neither loved nor hated.

It was with deep pain that Marie read Raoul D'Oban's letter of congratulation, which came to her from Toulouse. In its cold, formal words the girl read that her heart had been caught by his handsome face and soldierly bearing. The glance of a forty had seen nothing in the weak, trembling girl sufficient to arrest his attention, far less to gain his love.

While the Marquis and the Marquise du Terrail were upon their lengthy wedding tour throughout Europe, Captain D'Oban, with Irene, was stationed in Toulouse, waiting anxiously for the regiment to be recalled to Paris and to the maneuvers at Chalons, where he would meet Irene and Marie for the first time, they had both received his letter announcing his marriage, but Marie more sad, more discouraged than before.

CHAPTER III.

THE IDOL OF THE REGIMENT.

"Would you believe it, Raoul, Marie believes in ghosts?"

Irene Grey D'Oban who uttered these words the day after the conversation which had taken place in the gardens of the Castle du Terrail. She and her brother had their little villa near Camp de Chalons where the officers were encamped during the summer practice. She was seated on the carpet at her brother's feet, with one elbow resting on his knee, a brown eye was sparkling with fun and mischief, fixed on Raoul's handsome face.

He was smiling down at her with all the love and tenderness he possessed for his favorite child. When Irene saw that her words had not produced the effect she desired, she pouted a little and with a toss exclaimed in disappointed tones:

"Then, Raoul, you are not surprised one bit, and I thought you would start and say that you never have thought her so foolish, and of all things to be afraid of ghosts! But instead of there like an Egyptian mummy, as though there was nothing in the whole world that had the power to cause you the least surprise."

Smoothing the girl's rebellious hair into something like order, his clear voice talking amusement, he replied in a tender, he replied:

"You would have startled me if you had told me that Mademoiselle de Mieux had to seek a woman as the Marquise du Terrail should, be surprising."

Irene laughed in her low, hearty manner, which had the same effect on the listener as a ray of sunshine in a cloudy day has on depressed spirits.

"Well, after all," she said, "if you must wait until I believe in ghosts, I very much fear that you will die before you experience the fear which you condemn."

Then bounding to her feet with startling lightly of movement, as with the grace of a bewitching grace she went through the beautiful medicine of the military salute.

"How would it do for me, the daughter of the regiment, to be afraid of those unreal things? Why, I should be the talk of the whole regiment, when a whole army has not the power to make me afraid. It is better for a soldier to blush than to turn pale. I do neither, not even when that old hypocrite of a Marquis du Terrail comes to dinner. I do not sit stiff as a wooden image, with my hands folded demurely in my lap, for fear that any one might read what I think of them."

She paused for breath; then, as a mischievous smile parted her lips, she continued:

"She must be right as to that, for what I think is not worth thinking about, so there's an end to those things. I would never do for the Marquise du Terrail. I believe she is the most hypocritical old hag that ever lived; that I think she would be a coquette if she dared, and would flirt to give her a chance, and that I am sure she is jealous of her handsome husband, though I have no her social success."

Then all of a sudden she burst into another peal of laughter, and resuming her position at her brother's feet, said:

"I have told you one of the scolding the Duchess gave me at the English embassy. If I am not careful she will be sending me away. I always have enough time to put on the full uniform for society, with its low neck and short sleeves, and then I am ordered off to the train, in which I am always catching my hair. After I have told you of my conduct, I want you to tell me if what I did was so very dreadful after all. Well, I had been very good the whole evening, for the Duchess had told me that I must be more careful than usual, as there were many ladies present married there than elsewhere.

"But you know how I have been good for any length of time I am always sure to do something which will destroy my favorable record, and that is just what I did at the reception. I had been seated for over an hour in a corner, and though I must have been made of stone, listening to what the Duchess was saying to a little bald-headed man—a perfect fool, by the way. Suddenly a tall and stately gentleman came and took a seat not far from me. His bosom was almost covered with decorations of all sorts, and having nothing else to do, I amused myself by trying to name them all. All at once I came upon one I had never seen before. This puzzled me so that, unable to resist the prompting of my curiosity, I went and took a seat beside the gentleman and asked him to tell me from which country that particular decoration came. And that's what the Duchess considered so dreadfully shocking and unladylike."

A smile parted her lips and called into play all the simples lurking about her mouth; then she resumed:

"To tell the truth, he did look a little surprised, but he answered at once that this decoration had been given him by a Chinese viceroy. He told me the name, which must have contained a hundred letters, half of which I have forgotten, but he was polite to add that he wasted his breath for nothing. Then I don't remember the name, and if I did, I never could pronounce it. After that he expressed a wish to dance, and such a thing as a décoration had attracted the attention of a pretty girl.

"This little observation a simple thing caused me to make an indignant reply, for to me anything that rewards bravery or intelligence is worth more than millions. My reply must have suited him, for he asked me my name. I told him that I was the daughter of the regiment, that I loved the officers, the drums, the cannon, and even the horses. After that neither of us thought of anything but dancing, and we talked and laughed for over an hour. He questioned me about my life, about you and the soldiers, and—to tell the truth—spoke of nothing else.

"Then he told me of the army when he was a soldier, for he was a soldier, and proud of today. At last he rose to depart and as he bowed his name,

remarked: "See, I can get angry sometimes."

Two days later Irene, returning from a horseback ride, rushed into her brother's study, saying in tones full of excitement:

"Raoul, I'm going to hold a reception at the mess tomorrow at 3 o'clock. I've just been over to tell them, for—would you believe it?—your man Jean told me that my soldiers were beginning to think that since I have become a young lady I will forget them all and cease to love them.

"I felt so bad that I cried and ordered my mare saddled at once, and did not lose a minute in going and telling them that tomorrow I'd hold a reception, and they'd see if I had forgotten them or not. Oh, brother, if you had seen their faces light up with joy!—why, you would have felt like kissing every one of them—I know I did."

And the recollection of the happiness her promised visit had caused her friends brought tears to the bright eyes; then seeing that her brother had noticed them, she said with a little sobbing laugh:

"I don't care if I do cry; their love has so touched me that it would do me good to have a real good cry over it."

Then, throwing her arms around his neck: "Oh, Raoul, it is so sweet to be loved, and everybody loves your little Irene."

The sight of his sister's emotion checked the words that rose to his lips. His better reason told him that Irene was getting too old for those reunions at the mess, but as it pleased her so much, he had not the courage to deny her this joy.

The following afternoon a queer scene was taking place before the mess. Irene, dressed in a dark green habit, in which she felt more at ease than in her ball dresses, was surrounded by her soldiers, those friends of her childhood. She stood there laughing, talking with the spirit of a schoolgirl on a vacation. And the men, standing respectfully around, gazed with lovelit eyes on their idol, their child as she called herself.

She had a pleasant word for each. She would ask one if his old mother was well, of another if his wounded leg still troubled him, of a third how he liked his new medal. Knowing all their histories, she did not find it hard to speak to each of the subject nearest his heart. For the recruits she had a word of welcome, and by a simple smile made them as much her slaves as her older friends.

All at once a deep hush fell over the assembly, for a young officer, who had just joined the regiment, appeared. Irene saw her friends' embarrassment, so saluting the young man as one of his men might have done she said:

"Lieutenant, I am Irene D'Oban, daughter of the regiment, and the officers have always allowed my visits. I tell you this that you do not reprimand my soldiers if my presence here breaks any of the rules of discipline."

There was something so winning, so out of the ordinary, in Irene at that moment, that the young officer replied as he gazed with evident admiration on the girl's flushed face and sparkling eyes:

"I would not have the cruelty to grudge my men the pleasure your presence is giving them."

This reply pleased Irene, and with her usual candor she remarked:

"Ah, I see that I will soon have another officer to spoil me and obey my caprice. I will tell Raoul how nice you are."

Astonished, yet charmed, Lieutenant Armand Lepage walked away, but the memory of the mischievous face remained with him for many days. Until that day the charms of women had been powerless to touch him, but the girl who spoke to him as one of his soldiers might have done, who frankly told him he pleased her, produced on his heart the first lasting impression it had received.

After his departure the conversation went on as gaily as before, and when it was time for Irene to depart, an old soldier, in the name of the regiment, handed her a huge bouquet of flowers.

She thanked him with grateful, happy tears in her eyes. All the way back to the villa she gave loving taps to the flowers while she murmured softly:

"How they love me, my soldiers, and how I love them!"

CHAPTER IV.

IN SOCIETY'S NET.

As Marie had told Irene, her unhappy heart demanded the quiet of a retired life, where she would not be forced to wear continually the mask of pleasure. She wanted rest and forgetfulness, but she got very little of it during the winter which followed her homecoming. It seemed as though the hostesses of the most exclusive houses plotted with fate to drag this unwilling victim amid the ruffs of a social world so dangerous to a heart without love. Invitation after invitation came to them, and the Marquis du Terrail insisted that none should be refused. He was proud of his beautiful wife, he would say, and he desired that all Paris should have a chance ta envy his good fortune.

Before long a crowd of admirers began to flutter about the Marquise du Terrail. Something in her face seemed to encourage those among them who did not scorn as unmanly the act of robbing a man of his wife. The mute misery of her eyes, the sad languor of her smile, spoke of a dissatisfied heart, and many were willing to console her.

When a married woman is courted as was Marie, it is not long before her rivals in social honors whisper against her character, and these hints taking root sometimes ruin forever the fair name of the victim, whose only fault perhaps is not to have married the man she loved. Thus it was with Marie. She had scarcely entered Parisienne society until by her toilets and her strange loveliness, which took the place of beauty, she had aroused many bitter jealousies. Soon murmurs began to circulate against her, and as the world is always ready to credit evil reports, the vague doubts of the beginning became the outspoken truths of the future. Before long the Marquise du Terrail's entry in a drawing-room caused a hush, while strange looks were exchanged between her women friends.

She still had friends, for though all thought the honor of the name of Du Terrail was unsafe in her hands, no public shame had marked her out as yet, and in the code of honor of society, a hidden fault is a pardoned one. Besides, she was the queen of the hour, and therefore became the great planet around which the minor satellites revolved, hoping to catch a little of the radiance of the other's triumphs.

Yet daily this life of forced gaiety told on Marie. Her form lost its plump contours, her eyes gained an unnatural brilliancy, while her manner was wildly gay one minute and mortally sad the next. Her soul during those months of struggle was like a ship without a rudder, tossed by the will of a tempestuous sea. One moment she would feel herself sinking; the next, by a powerful effort, she would save herself.

The one who helped her most in this combat of her life was Irene, who, as the guest of the Duchess de La Motte, was spending the winter in Paris, Raoul's regiment being quartered in a southern town. The free, unaffected manner of the young girl had a quieting and refreshing effect upon this worn-out woman, who since childhood had been forced to hold in check the gushings of her soul.

As Irene, with her brisk, uneven gestures and the embarrassment her evening toilet always gave her, would enter a drawing-room, a feeling of security would come to Marie's storm-tossed soul.

One day, however, Irene heard one of the stories that was being circulated against her friend. In the first hot moment of indignation she was going to take Marie's part, but on second thought she saw it would be better to warn Marie herself, so that by her future conduct she might put a stop to the calumny.

When she reached the Terrail mansion she was surprised and annoyed to find Marie in close tete-a-tete with the Vicomte de Lorgnac, one of her most advanced admirers. His character as a noted libertine and his fatal duel with a jealous husband, made him an undesirable guest in the Marquise du Terrail's parlor. After Irene's arrival he was not long in taking his departure, and the two were left alone.

"Poor fellow," said Marie after he was gone, "he is desperately in love with Marguerite de la Motte, but her father will not hear of the match, though his daughter returns the Vicomte's love. You see, de Lorgnac has sown too profuse a crop of wild oats to please the prudish Duc, and now that he wishes to settle down, the record of his past stands against him. Besides, I think the Duc de La Motte has other views for his daughter's future. Having no son of his own he desires Marguerite to marry a distant cousin of theirs, who will fall heir to the title. She has not seen him for several years, and the impression she has of him is not to his advantage. Besides, she loves de Lorgnac, and as the lovers have put me in their confidence, I help them all I can."

"Strange," remarked Irene. "Marguerite, whom I see daily at her parents' home, in whose intimacy I have lived since her mother has become my chaperon, has never spoken to me of her love."

"I know the reason," hurriedly answered Marie, "for Marguerite herself told me. One day she was about to put you in her confidence, and had just mentioned de Lorgnac's name, when you interrupted her by saying that he was not a man to your liking. When asked for what reason you disliked him you replied that a man who made love to every married woman was not the style you admired. After such a remark it was impossible for Marguerite to tell you her secret."

With these words Marie du Terrail rose, walked three or four times about the room, then resumed her seat. Irene looked at her with something like suspicion in her eyes, for the febrile intonation of the voice, the jerked, uneven gestures, were not in harmony with Marie's habitual languor. And almost coldly Irene remarked:

"I have not changed my opinion of the Vicomte de Lorgnac, and it would be better if you thought as I do, for his presence in your home is not going to put a stop to the stories which are being circulated against you."

A shiver shook Marie, her eyes took on a terrified look, and she cried:

"Stories against me! What do they say?"

"They are too great hypocrites to say anything against you in particular, but your husband—how they pity him! With many sighs and knowing looks they say he is not to be envied, though he has such a beautiful wife whom all men admire. And they say it is too bad you do not apprpeciate his slavish devotion, but find pleasure in the society of men not noted for their virtue; that a woman with a husband like yours should crave no other joy than the love of this noble man; and that should you ever be false to your vows you would be more to blame than another woman. These and many other things are being said about you by the very women who before you appear as your best friends. They predict your fall, but until this is a public fact you must not be slighted."

Marie rose; the blood in rushing to her heart left her face colorless, and her eyes brilliant with fever looked at Irene with wild despair expressed in their dusky depths.

"Ah, they say that of me! They dare hint that du Terrail's honor is unsafe in my hands! Oh, let them beware, for their unkind words may drive me to madness and make of today's falsehood the frightful reality of tomorrow. For I don't love my husband, I never did, I never shall! They are right when they say that his brutal passion, his abject servility, has not awakened in my heart the throbbings of love. Yes, I hate him—this man my father forced me to marry; yet in spite of all I will do my duty to the end, even if I must trample my heart into a bleeding, senseless mass. I will remain faithful to my vows—yes, even in thought, but they must not gall me to desperation, for then I might forget all in my desire to break the dolorous chains of my misery."

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These startling words, together with the sound of her voice, expressing the conflicting emotions of suffering, anger and wounded pride, filled Irene with astonishment, coming as they did from one she thought too weak to feel the sting of calumny.

But now Marie dropped back upon the sofa. The fire died from her eyes, and she resumed once more her discouraged and subdued manner, for her usual nature had regained the mastery. The daring, the anger, that for a while had broken through the vigilance of her timidity, died out, spent by its very fury, and the fictitious strength it had given her died with it.

"You, at least, do not believe me false?" she questioned in wistful accents, which contrasted strangely with the fiery tones of an instant before.

The doubt that Lucien de Lorgnac's presence had caused to germinate in Irene's heart had been dispersed by Marie's passionate protest, and she replied:

"Come, Marie, that question is useless, for my presence and my words are ample proof that I do not believe the calumny that is being spoken against you. Oh, I am sick of this false, unkind world in which our rank places us!"

Then as a sudden brightness stole over her face, which during the interview had been surprisingly grave, she exclaimed:

"Oh, how much more I admire the rough truthfulness of my soldiers, those truehearted, noble men! All the dukes, kings or princes in the world are not worth one of them!"

She sprang to her feet—her whole aspect changed. Her eyes flashed with the intense fire of love, her slight form was proudly erect and in her praise of those friends of her youth she put all the strength of her noble soul.

And Marie du Terrail, crushed and subdued, envied the character of her friend, composed as it was of generous impulses and sincere affection, with manly strength to support its virile daring. In the agony of the present blow which was breaking her strength, how much did the Marquise du Terrail regret that, like Irene, she was not the happy, unaffected daughter of the regiment!

In next week's issue of the Ledger another installment of this captivating story will be offered the reader. Each subscription to the Ledger calls for a free camera or patterns as the subscriber may choose. See our announcement on pages thirteen and fifteen.

The Barber's Soliloquy.

Hair trimmed? All right. This is funny weather for June. More like March or October. But you can't tell nothing about weather. Ain't that right? I bet a fellow 60 cents the other day. He was four-flushing around about Jeffries. You bet I bet him in a jiffy. "Put up or shut up," I said. Ain't that right? Getting thin on top. Yes.

He said Jeff could put the miner all to the bad in three rounds. I said "No." Ain't that right? Yes. I bet him Jeff would not stay thirty-two rounds. That's right.

Have a seafoam? No? You need a hair restorer. Would not stick to your head if they were found and restored to you? You make a joke with me. All right. Maybe you want to buy a lottery ticket? No? I know a man that gave a quarter for a one-sixteenth ticket and he won 14,000 frongs. A frong is three dollar. That's right. You can't tell where the lightning strike. Maybe the Washington American League team win a game some day.

Does the razor pull? Yes? It oughtn't to. I use antiseptic on it. Who you believe the Democrats nominate? You better watch out for Bryan. Maybe nobody else take it. Ain't that right? You want neck shaved round or square? All right. You should try a face massage. Your face is with tetter full. You should have a private mug. [illegible] sell you one with your name painted on [illegible] gold, with blue chrysanthemum for tw[illegible] dollar. You ever play the races? My frien[illegible] which works in hardware store give m[illegible] hot tip on the fourth race. He got inside information from trainer which bought some horseshoe nail and some battery wire. I think I play a quarter in a pool on it. He says play Employment Agency for place. Hair parted in the middle? Next!

Little Oddities.

Recently women's footraces at Treptow, near Berlin, caused a great deal of interest. Two of the competitors boldly donned jerseys and knickerbockers, but the remainder ran in skirts. Several appeared on the track in high-heeled boots. A considerable number dropped from exhaustion within fifty yards of the starting point. One sprained her ankle, another fell and broke her arm and a third fainted from excitement before the signal was given to go. Most of the competitors appeared to be absolutely untrained.

—

A German society has lately published an interesting paper on the subject of ecclesiastical anathemas launched in the middle ages against animals. Among the maledictions cited is that of a pastor of Dresden, who in 1559 cursed the sparrows for distracting his congregation.

—

Dr. Dabbs of London writes: "I do not war against large hats for women, as they are hygienic, inasmuch as they prevent feminine kissing, always to my mind an insanitary and supererogatory habit."

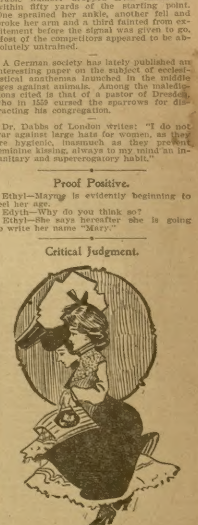
Proof Positive.

Ethyl—Mayme is evidently beginning to feel her age.

Edyth—Why do you think so?

Ethyl—She says hereafter she is going to write her name "Mary."

Critical Judgment.



"Was the pianist really good?"

"Oh! yes, indeed! His hair was nearly a foot long."

IN MASQUERADE;

OR

THE LUCK OF A FREE LANCE.

By WILLIAM R. EYSTER.

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CHAPTER VIII.

WE TAKE TO THE BOATS.

I had no idea of how much time had elapsed, and as little knowledge of where I was. When I opened my eyes it was in utter darkness, and my head felt as though it had been split and bodily mended. I believe I gave a grunt—fortunately I uttered no word—almost immediately I heard the voice of Campos:

"You are alive then, Major. I have been having my doubts of it. I tell you it is not a pleasant thing to be shut up in the dark with a corpse. Are you bound?"

"Be the powers, Oi wouldn't objict to a dasin corrupses so Oi had the roight man amongst me. Hand an' fut am all a-toied, to say nothing av a cracked head. How liver are we to get out av this? Sure an' the quarthers are oncommonly close, wid a most uncomfortable shmell av bilges wather an' dirt."

I was glad to note that Campos was not overwhelmed by our position. The teeth of many a man would have been chattering by this time, and he would have been more or less dazed with fright and the darkness. Campos merely stood up and spoke:

"I would sooner trust to the cruel mercy of the Spaniard than go overboard with a sprained right leg. Right now the sea is almost loose, and when I free myself I can help you. Get your face loose an' this find me a hilp. Praise the saints, we'll be able for thim yit!"

The last we found, safe enough, for they had not searched me at all. For that reason the revolver was still at my hip. It did not take long to free me altogether and then we were more comfortable, even if no better off than before. My companion, who had been allowed the use of his sight when brought inboard, had to thrash about a bit to would be difficult, if not impossible. I took a different tack.

"Av the road out wor so full of impracticability its not this throuble they would be takin' at all, at all. No doubt the route is plain enough av we could foinde it. An', be the way, how long have we been this? Eh?"

"Don't ask me. I should say for ages if it were not that the steamer is still bumping on with teeth and toenails."

"That last is no sign. They say a starv chase will last a long war; an' it's not so sure they can make up wid us. Omyhow, it's our toime to be afther goin' out av this. At which iod wor the door?"

Campos had expressed doubts about there being any door at all; and expressed a certainty that we had been thrown from above. I had a dim recollection of such a thing. Though wishing to husband them as much as possible, I asked him to use his eyes—sight as swiftly as he could while the torch which I improvised out of some odd cloth in my pocket should last. Then I struck a match.

We were in a narrow little compartment. Overhead we could see the outlines of what might be a door—though too far out of my reach. There appeared to be no other regular means of exit; but the walls, though planked, seemed susceptible of attack. On the floor lay a few pieces of iron—the bolts and bits of machinery—some of which would weigh perhaps fifty pounds. Unless the vessel was re-enforced with her cargo, or something else behind it, there would be little trouble in breaking out, even though the work had to be done in the dark. The bulkhead was the point we had to assail and I said as much to my companion. To my surprise I found that he hesitated.

After this length of time I can hardly understand how under such circumstances I could keep on with the part I had assumed. But the fact was, I had become so thoroughly identified with it that perhaps there would have been more danger in my actually wished to throw it off. Captain Finistan himself could never have been more in the hands of the enemy than I was at that moment.

I gave him an opinion very straight; and my words braced him up as I, had hoped. Indeed, he suddenly became as anxious as ever to get out of the hopple, and was for immediately attacking the bulkhead. I agreed with him, and we went to work.

First of all I made ready my weapon of attack, feeling around till I found it in the dark. Then another match was sacrificed and, by the uncertain light of a fresh torch we managed to scrape together, I fattened the planking at what seemed the most vulnerable spot.

And we met with speedy success, I assure you. The boards broke away before us, and cautiously we crawled through the opening.

"What next?" whispered Campos, thoroughly willing to allow me to take the lead, but acting like a man who had made up his mind to follow.

"Git to our berths an' lole jow for the prisint. Sure, an' we can't foight the whole Spanish navy. Whin we say thim rowlin' the grindstone will be toimes to make a move."

While I did not intend to be cooped up in the run, without a chance for life if the steamer was sent to the bottom, or the captain wanted to make good his threat of throwing us overboard, I was perfectly willing to make further difficulty, and if we escaped from the mix the action of the captain might be altogether overlooked.

It was no easy task to get out of the hold, and the work took time. Of course, there was some question as to how the chase was going, and we cautiously made our way to the deck.

There was no need for us to hesitate. If we had made our appearance at the captain's cabin door then and there he would have taken notice. He had more important matters on the tapis. Getting us on board seemed to tell at last! Without question he had all along had a scheme and a hope; and for a time it looked as though his hope was to be realized. The steamer was decreasing, whilst the Spanish vessel was gaining. At last we could see her plainly, and we could see that the Spaniard had begun to fire. If our captain held on, that was what seemed certain to happen. Unless there was a wind and a harbor dead ahead, the present course was one of foolishness which must be stopped.

I was ready for almost anything as I spoke.

Campos, are ye game to take the sh't'amer wid me?' Av ye are, say the word an' we'll make for it."

"If you think you can handle her any better than he is doing, I'll follow your lead; but I don't see how we can hope to succeed doing with her."

"Nayther do we course. Ol know whin Oi have the worst av it an' am fool enough to give up me loife widout a struggle."

I was really in earnest, and was feeling for my revolver when the question was settled for me in a manner that was most startling. There was a thump; and an instant later an explosion. The Spaniard had fired from the Don, he can be perseveringly industrious when he holds the whip hand, and is prone to overdo for death and destruction.

Certainly, he was well within his rights—he had certainly given us what we gave out that the shell was entirely accidental. At any rate, the shot completely dispelled the fierceness for the Alixis. In half a minute there was confusion well confounded on the Spanish vessel. Officers ran to and fro, and hurried movements which I understood only too well. Evidently there was more gunpowder than I had supposed, and it was time we were getting out of the way.

I might have known how we would be received, but a sudden fear had come to me to be with the herd. We edged up toward the captain and his crew and I stood facing the gentleman from whom I had fled.

Looking up suddenly, the captain caught sight of me.

For a moment he must have thought I was a ghost. His face whitened through the tan in the moonlight, and he staggered back a trifle. Before I could find a word, however, he recovered himself, and as the shot went up, there was a flash and report—and Campos went down.

Turn about was fair play. It was my friend's fate now to get it. I caught him as he fell and with pistol leveled over his shoulder backed away. After such a reception there was no use in think of going with the crowd.

Then a crash came which drove away the idea altogether. Another shell had struck the Alixis amidships, and the crew, letting the boat they were working at go down by the run, went tumbling overboard, the captain himself leaping. Campos and I were alone on the deck: the steamer was on fire; whilst the cruiser, a mile or so away, was pitching her missiles at us with an awful accuracy, since a word I had heard as the men scrambled overboard was ringing in my ears with a horrible sound:

"Dynamite!"

The only wonder was we had not all been blown to the four winds already. Even if the Spaniard stopped firing on seeing we were helpless, there was no telling how soon the flames would do the work, and Campos and I go up together. I looked at my companion and was surprised to see that he was recovering consciousness. As I bent anxiously over him I heard a light step and some one speaking:

"Say, youse kids better git a move on. Dis sub's bound fur glory an' de bottom, an' I don't jine in guess youse wants ter move along wid it."

Looking up, I recognized the cabin boy, who had heretofore kept stubbornly out of my way whenever I had happened to want him. He was cool as you please, and had a bundle in his hand, ready to travel.

"Right ye are, me b'y," was my ready answer. "Av there's snither boat av comfortable quality an' serviceable bigness, it's meself will be glad to launch her, providin' it's built in raysonable boundes av manageability."

"Dis way, den, an' git a hustle on. I don't want ter linger—fur I ain't don't. Me side pard 'll be along in a holy minnit, but of yer lingerin' a thousand years ain't no reason yer shouldn't save it."

"It's a broth av a b'y ye are for a suggistion. Kape an eye on me frind whoile I reconnother."

We had our second wind now, and were all ready for things as we found them. As I stooped to my friend I positively refused to think about the danger that was all around and under us.

Then I felt a tug at the belt around my waist. I thrust some scattered things together with the provisions, tobacco, etc., which I then jammed shut, caught up my second sword and belt, and hurried on deck with it. Then the cabin boy and I went for his partner with the boat. Campos leaned against the bulwarks and stared at us in a dazed way.

How we did it I never know, but we went over the side of the Alixis in what must have been fairly good order, pushing away from the vessel in a long chain. Just as the flames began to creep into sight we were off.

How soon would the searchlight of the man-of-war find us out, and when would the inevitable explosion occur?

CHAPTER IX.

THE PANAMA AT LAST.

Boat and steamer slipped rapidly apart. Campos was almost himself again, but had his head in a bandage, and he would have lacked attention just then. We were not long in getting a long start. Some of the explosion did not come soon it would not be long before the bursting flames would reveal us to the Spaniard, who had ceased firing but was standing in for the Alixis as fast as she could run her down.

"The fool must see she is on fire," muttered Campos, nodding toward the Don. "If he lays her aboard they'll all be blown to kingdom come. By the way, O'Rourke looks like murder. Shall I give them a hail?"

"I'm not objectin', but av Oi wor you Od'd lit the contruct to Jack here. Yes couldn't make Spanish out at this distance."

The sailor took the hint. Rising to his feet he straightened himself and shouted through his hands:

"Ahoy, there, the steamer—she's loaded with dynamite, an' afire. The crew's took to the boats. Steer clear or it's the powder kingdom come."

We heard an answering shout, but our duty was done and safety demanded that we pull away in silence.

Then there was a crash and a roar. It was over. What effect the explosion had on the Spaniard we knew not, but we were safe for the present. As minute after minute passed away the lights of the Don grew fainter and more distant, constant, finally fading out of sight.

We had headed in the direction in which the other boat had pulled after leaving the Alixis, and were not at all anxious to come across it. There was a keg of water and a bag of biscuit, thanks to the forethought of the cabin boy, Jack Jacks, and our boat rode as though seaworthy. Jack Jacks threw off by a stone—which proved founder us as well—we were in fair fix to make port, or last until we were picked up.

Well, somehow we worried through the night and watched the first cold streaks of a cheerless morning and Thursday. At least we had not got off our course—which I was almost ready to credit of Jack. More than once had I aired my secret opinion I would have sworn we were completely turned around. We have much of an idea where we were; but so long as we kept the steamer's course we had little danger of mistake, and the storm I had been expecting was slow in coming. We crouched together in the dull sunlight, munching our dry breakfast; and then, Jack pointed to the north. In the semi-muggy atmosphere we could see, far away, the low-lying handful of black smoke which had been over an on-coming steamer.

"There's our chance," he said, shading his eyes to try and make out the vessel he knew was plowing toward us. "Maybe it's the Spaniard, but to my mind it's more likely it's a fruiter bound south for a cargo, an' I say, git on board."

"So say we all of us," answered Campos, brightening up. "I'll run the risks of being carried into Havana sooner than spend another day in this boat."

Nevertheless, we lay there in some quietly. It the boat from the deck. I had been picked up I did not doubt the captain would do his best to make it interesting for us. It was quite a sensation when Jack, in suddenly awakened animation, slapped his thigh and cried:

"Blessed if it ain't the old Panamawl We must have passed her after all!"

I did not know the Panama by sight, but was willing to take Jack's word for it. I confess I was not as happy as he seemed to be. In spite of all the anxiety I had been showing, I would wonder if I had not seen some other vessels I could have named. Of course, Mrs. Marchmont would be looking over the rail, along with a few score of other passengers, and what a sight for them would I be!

I had run out upon the deck of the Alixis in the dead calm, and our injuries in the hold had left their marks on my linen. Then the blood from the cracks on my head had never been washed off; and my night in the boat had given me a generally crumpled appearance. But the most shocking object I was, to make my appearance on the deck of the Panama, and what a sensation an exhibition there was almost a certainty of! Of course, Mrs. Marchmont would be altogether. I had not decided on what course I would take if I came on board after the fashion of a castaway, I am willing to confess I was unsettled. It seemed best, for the present, to remain where I was, and keep out of the background, until I had ascertained whether or not the ladies were on the steamer. After that, I could lay my plans.

At all events, Jack was right. The Panama was in sight, and as the vessel drew near we could see several scores of heads along the rail. Our voyage had lasted long enough for the passengers to be glad of almost anything to break its monotony.

As we lay almost to her course there was no danger of not being seen. We were taken on board without difficulty or delay.

As I stepped forward, with sword and belt in one hand and telescope in the other, I looked anxiously for the face of my very heroic appearance, and greatly to my satisfaction failed to find a recognizable face among the number turned so curiously toward us. Then, since he my life to willingly, I gave some one else to do the talking, and Campos told a story not far from the truth. He'd been cruising in the Spanish navy, and on the steamroom reserved for him, which he should have to vacate for the ladies.

When we awoke, the day was well nigh ended, and the crowds of people began to be felt. As the reader knows, I had considered up some things at random, belonging to the cabin boy, and had managed to get light clothes at the least. To my disgust I found that Jack had left me a shirt, and nothing else in the way of coat and pantaloons.

Campos heard my muttered execration and at once asked what was the matter. Then he, too, was disgusted to find he had taken flight of the situation.

"Never mind, course. Gird on your whole armament if you feel inclined. Just now the ladies on the ship we have hailed of and no harm can come. I assure you. If any one recognizes you they will be slow to speak of it. Remember your importance."

There was nothing else to do, unless I should attempt to borrow clothes—a thing that had its advantages. What I had gone through with had made quite a change in my appearance, but I was willing to bet odds believe Mrs. Marchmont would recognize me. Of course, I should be glad to be recognized, for a time at least, to maintain.

I had been presentable in my new make-up when Campos and I turned out of the cabin together, sharp set for the supper that was being laid. Almost the first person we ran against was Marcus Whetstone.

Of course, I should have been more acknowledged, even by the tremor of an eyelash, I had seen him before. Not that I was afraid of him, for I was sure at once he was here in pursuit of the woman he had called his wife, and that all of my schemes to baffle which would be all the more likely to be unaware of my presence. Of course, after seeing him, I never for a moment doubted Mrs. Marchmont's presence.

He glanced at me carelessly enough, but with more closely at Campos, and then nodded. My companion returned the salutation crustily and in kind, and we passed without a word. He did not appear at the table, and over that I was well satisfied.

Look as I might I saw nothing of the ladies, but there were a number of vacant places at the table; and several of these were almost opposite to us. Perhaps one of them belonged to "her." I kept thinking of that until I was almost ready to rise and flee, and did actually turn my eyes away as much as possible from the spot, being possessed of the idea that some time when I

looked up I would find her there. I inclined my head resolutely toward Campos, but by and by felt as plainly as could be an influence which was not mere natural perversity, forcing my glance in a certain direction. I stood it as long as I could—and then looked.

Yes, there she was—Mrs. Marchmont, I mean; and her gaze was squarely on my face. Perhaps she had heard my voice as I chatted with Campos; yet there was no sign of recognition in her eyes as she turned them away to her own plate.

That gave me a chance to look down the line, and I was not surprised to see Lorena sitting on the farther side. She, at least, appeared puzzled, and I could guess about how it was. There was something in face and voice which told her I had at some time been an acquaintance, yet she did not identify me with the all-around servitor from whom they had not long been parted with expressed regret. How could she?

I took good care no light of recognition should shine in my own face. I wondered whether it might not be well to tell Campos that, on second thought, he might as well call me Finnicune and be done with it. That would give me a chance to make a steamship acquaintance with the ladies, and it was not likely they had ever heard of the distinguished free lance—which was all I knew about it. Nevertheless, I could not but cast furtive glances at the elder of the two.

"Good heavens, how her voyage and troubles had aged her! There was the same stately poise of the head, the same face, the same sloping shoulders; yet beyond them all I saw a bruised and perhaps a broken woman, at least a score of years older than when she was facing Whetstone at the house on Avenue Z, and minus all the flaming courage which had drawn me to her. The change in spirit was not so much a visible matter as one to be felt; but the physical difference was in strong difference. Knowing something of these things, however, I was inclined to believe that carelessness engendered by the fatigues of the journey was to blame, and that when made up with the old-time care she would look young as ever. And with her looks, her courage would come back to her.

I shuffled through the dinner in some way or other, and was ready to go on deck with Campos when he had satisfied his hunger. We had run through the muggy weather, and were plowing along in the clear twilight of a cloudless evening. Singly or in groups the passengers followed out, and I noticed how many of them glanced curiously at me—or my uniform. I was the last sensation. A little later, when I had almost given them up, Mrs. Marchmont made her appearance, leaning on her daughter's arm.

To my surprise and discomfort they came almost directly toward us, and I saw Mrs. Marchmont was saying something to Lorena in a way which evidently betokened a recognition. Bless my soul! They were going to claim me as their coachman.

Not a bit of it. There was recognition in the care-lined face—but it was not for me. My companion gave a little start; and then they were bowing at each other; and before I knew what was going to happen Frederico was saying:

"Allow me, Mrs. Marchmont, to introduce to you my friend, Major O'Rourke, of the Second Irregulars."

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. MARCHMONT OFFERS ME A MILLION.

Mrs. Marchmont held out her hand very frankly.

"Any friend of yours will be welcome. I am happy to meet you. My daughter, Lorena, Major O'Rourke."

Miss Lorena was not so cordial, and again I saw the puzzled look in her face. I would have given something nice to have dared throw my brogue to the winds, but it would not do to attempt too radical a change. Fortunately, I could tone it down a little, supposedly through being on my company manners, and Campos would not detect the difference. It was not so hard, also, to give another trick to my voice, though it might not be so easy to indicate on paper. I bowed composedly.

"I confess your appearance is something of a surprise," she went on. "Though I have been confined to my stateroom a good part of the voyage, it seems strange I should not sooner have known of your presence on board."

The words were rather addressed to Campos, but I took upon myself the duty of answering them.

"Not so strange, me dear madame, as it moight be, since we have just arroived. An', savin' your prisince, a deauce av a toime we had to get here."

"How—why? I do not understand."

At that Campos spoke up.

"Not to make a mystery of it, my dear Mrs. Marchmont, we were to join the Panama at Charleston, but were a trifle too late. We followed in a steamship which was on the eve of starting, and met with various adventures we could have very well done without. Eventually the vessel was sunk by, I suppose, a Spanish cruiser. We, with two others, were this morning picked up by the Panama as we continued our cruise in an open boat after being deserted by the captain and his crew. That is the story in brief; if you allow the Major to get fairly started he will take up the rest of the evening with the details."

"The Lord knows, there's plinty av thim," I interjected, sotto voce.

"And do you expect to leave again in the same unceremonious fashion?" asked Miss Lorena.

"Be the powers, Oi have c'ased to ixpict onnything whatsoiver, but av Providince is good to us we'll continue our journey this toime to the ind, av it be bitther or itherwoise."

After that, although Campos seemed to object to detail, the conversation turned on our late adventures. As I carefully avoided any reference to the matters of which we had talked, he gradually grew more at his ease, and even laughed at our having been taken for conspirators, interested in the Cuban squabble. Nevertheless, I soon saw it was not a very safe subject. Mrs. Marchmont was shrewd, and though she laughed with us I could see her eyes glisten as she answered:

"Ridiculous, of course, since there is little honor or profit to be gained by either of you on 'the Ever Faithful Isle.' If it had been a little nearer to the line, now, the mistake might not have seemed unnatural. Campos, here, is a restless sort of vagabond, who has been a very Ishmael in politics; whilst you, Major, if I mistake not, have a sword to swing for the first one who asks the use of it."

"Oi am free to admit that at wan toime Oi wor more givin' to lookin' for the fun av a scrimmage than the roight av it. Oi am owlder now, an' me prisint imploymint is entoirely p'aceful, though somethin' av a saycrit. Oi no longer ripresint Mars an' Minerva, but Plutus, an' the ither gods av commerce an' thrade."

"Ah, how is that? Do you know, I myself have some interests in this southern country. If you have any schemes in view which may bring the moribund back to life, pray let me hear of them. It may be I can help you more than you think."

"In all confidence?"

"Certainly."

"Will, thin"—and I leaned forward, speaking in a lower tone—"Oi have little to do wid the projict mesilf, but an agint Oi am for those behoind it, an' go to spoie out the nakidness or the fatniss av the land. Av coourse, Oi will be rez de chausee, so to shpake, an' wid millions in de schame strange it would be av there wor no commindable pickin's. Av it looks comforthable, it's the howl counthry we m'ane to buy, no liss. For mesilf, the milithary resourcis are me province, an' investigation av the probable safety av capital whin investid.

"Have you been playing with me?"

Av that can be assured there is certainly enough about the matther av profit."

"I see You go as a military expert, with a secret commission."

"Something av the koind. Me experience with the Spanish-sp'akin' nations av the South will rinder me qualifoyed to jedge."

"And if you are not afraid to trust me with the name, what country is it you intend to buy? There are half a dozen that would be the better for the sale, but you can hardly expect to purchase tnem all."

"In confoidince?" I again asked, extending my hand—which she took—and looking her firmly in the face.

"Certainly; thongh you should hardly ask me to pledge myself twice over."

"Thin—Honduras," I answered at a venture, and because that was the first name which came into my head. "Wid a transcontinental railroad and a hundred millions to develop wid, sure, we'll make the shlaypey owld republic bloom loike the Garden of Ayden."

"And how large a share are you going to allot me in the speculation?" she asked, her eyes glittering and all on fire at once with the possibilities of the plan.

"Sure, ye must spake wid the syndicate; but av ye have a million loose at both inds it's not loikely they'll kape ye out."

For being done on the spur of the moment the invention was quite creditable, as I felt when I saw how eagerly it was taken up. As for Campos, he did not have a word to say, but listened in what I conceived to be the silence of stupefaction. I went a little farther in my revelations.

"It wor the indjy rubber troust originally, but it's gone far beyondt that now. Av it wor not for the law ov the latitude there's no tillin' where we would shtop, but we can't colonize onliss we throw in a few million naygurs be way av ixpirimint. An' that would be horribly ixpinsive. It's joust Northern brains an' capital an' Southern opporthunity that will astonish the worruld."

"They will indeed. Thank you for your confidence, Major O'Rourke, and you may say to the syndicate that if they obtain the concessions I see they are after, I have the million you spoke of, and will be clamoring for my place on the ground floor. Do not forget it the next time you communicate with them. Perhaps, if the complement is nearly full, you had better ask for the shares in your own name. About that, however, we can arrange hereafter. I am very glad indeed to have met you. Something of this kind has been one of my dreams. I must go in now, but will see you tomorrow. Good-night. Come, Lorena."

The two bade us good-night and went away, refusing our escort, which, for certain reasons, I was afraid to press upon them. Miss Lorena was saying but little, yet I could see she was thinking a great deal—and I would have given much more than a penny for her thoughts.

When they were gone Campos turned to me with a puzzled look.

"If this is a bona fide scheme you could not have hit it better. Mrs. Marchmont has the million; and she has something better—she has influence. But if you are engaged in any such enterprise as that I may as well give up all hope of having you with us. Man alive! Have you been playing with me; or did you forget all about this other thing? I swear, it would be just like you. Drop a million to fight for a thousand, and no sure thing when you get it."

"Howld yer whist. D' yez think Oi can't roun thim both? This wor simple business; but the foightin', an' all that, wor the playsure av loife. An' don't forgit, mon, that you an' Oi have come through the peril ov our loives togither. Whin Oi'm naydid you'll foind me wid yez yit."

I held out my hand and he grasped it firmly. At that moment I felt every word I said. If I was deceiving him in some things it was part of the necessity of the case. I did not want Mrs. Marchmont to recognize her servant after having gone thus far; and why should I not retire in a blaze of glory? To her and Lorena there would be a fascinating and a haunting mystery regarding the insouciant free lance who allowed a hundred million syndicate to go to smash that he might throw himself and sword into a contemptible little Central American revolution. I knew if never another word was heard about it she would still always have a lingering belief in the reality of the scheme I had outlined. To Campos I might tell the truth some day; but the ladies should never be any the wiser! Good heavens! what fools men can be with a woman or two in the case, even if—— I had to cease my cogitations to answer a question of my companion, and after that was kept busy dodging uncomfortable points until we had smoked our cigars and decided it was time to turn in.

For half an hour I lay in my bunk, trying in a half-hearted sort of way to go to sleep, and all the time I could see the face of Mrs. Marchmont, lit up with enthusiasm, or the puzzled eyes of Miss Lorena, staring at me out of the darkness. When I could stand it no longer I got up and went on deck in my shirt sleeves, intending to moon around under the stars for a while, with a cigar in my mouth, and see if I could not steady my nerves.

I was just going to strike a fusee when I heard a low laugh coming from feminine lips; then a voice which I certainly recognized. As true as I tell you, it was Mrs. Marchmont, out again, when I thought she had been asleep this hour or more.

The night was so lovely that though the hour was late the deck was not altogether deserted, perhaps half a dozen passengers being scattered around. Lorena and her mother occupied steamer chairs by themselves, their heads close together, and it seemed to me they were talking of something which was proving vastly amusing. With a sudden stab it flashed through me that I must be the subject of that conversation. My flimsy pretense had been seen through, and a liar so monumental could be nothing but an object of contempt.

Ah, indeed! By an effort I recovered my sang froid, and to myself made vow that I would brazen it out in my new character as long as possible; if something did not turn up to help me out of the hopple, and start me on a new tack with flying colors, I was very much mistaken. Let them laugh. In fact, what was there to prevent my laughing with them? I lit my cigar and sauntered forward. When close to them I halted, as though just noticing their presence.

"Mrs. Marchmont, av Oi am not mistaken?" I said in a cautious tone. "Sure, an' ye will pardon me inthrusion av Oi till ye Oi have somethin' important to communicate."

"We could not consider you an intruder in any event," replied the lady, looking up. "If, however, it relates to the matter we were speaking of, I confess I would prefer leaving it until tomorrow."

"It is a matther relatin' sowly to yersilves," was my ready response. "Oi have been approached by an individual be the name av Whitstone, onder what s'ames to be a misapprehinsion. From his convorsation Oi wad think he moight have desoigns on yersilf. It's will for yez to k'ape on yer guard. Av ye n'ade a mon to spake wid him it is hardly nicissary to say Campos or mesilf wad be at yer service. Oi'd have dhrapped him quoietly overboard, but the oyes av siveral wor on me, an' Oi thought it bist to resarve me wrath."

For once Mrs. Marchmont was unnerved. She started up, and her voice changed wonderfully.

"Heavens! Not here! There must be some mistake about it."

"Scarcely. Av me oyes don't dec'ave me, there is the mon now."

I pointed at a figure which, with perfectly noiseless tread, was gliding directly toward us.

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"Yes," was the laconic reply.

"Pick any winners?" queried the garrulous party.

"Young man," replied the heavyweight, as he extracted a 50-cent cigar from a diamond-studded case and proceeded to light it, "I've got a better game than trying to pick winners."

"You don't say!" exclaimed the other.

"Yes," continued the obese party. "I'm a bookmaker and pluck the losers. See?"

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A girl hasn't much use for a man who is too cowardly to propose.

An officeholder no sooner loses his job than he begins to howl for reform.

When a woman has a long talk with a man it means that he's a good listener.

Chicago theater managers want the fire regulations made easier. Is it time to forget?

General Stoessel, the Russian commander who is defending Port Arthur, is a Swiss by birth.

If a man is too lazy to get up and light the kitchen fire he will never set the world ablaze.

It is only a matter of time until the fool and his money are on opposite sides of the market.

A lawyer never gives up a case until he has exhausted all the means at his client's disposal.

Nowadays when a man does a mean thing and gets caught he sets up the plea that he was hypnotized.

A married man has one advantage over the bachelor; when anything goes wrong he can blame it on his wife.

English critics are finding fault with Kouropatkin's strategy. They don't mention where or when he exhibited any.

When men will give up as much for tickets to hear a speech as they will to see a prize fight, look out for the millennium.

President Hadley of Yale wants graduates to avoid the tendency to make wealth. Most of them will find it an easy thing to do.

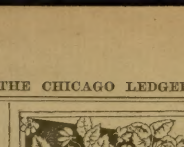
Mr. Morton is at least as much of a sailor as several distinguished men who have been excellent secretaries of the navy before him.

Even the wise man who thinks he knows it all doesn't know why the strenuous old man lays an egg instead of standing it on end.

No one has heard of the girls meeting and passing resolutions of sympathy for themselves because Gladstone Dowie has never been blessed.

Correspondents should be careful not to get the total number of Armenians massacred in a year greater than the number of inhabitants of Armenia.

There seems to be some doubt as to whether or not General Miles could pass a field civil-service examination if asked to qualify for the Prohibition nomination.



RUBY GORDON'S LOVE;

The Mistakes of a Life-Time.

By LIBBIE SPRAGUE PHILLIPS.

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CHAPTER X.

Mr. Armytage did not die, but his illness lasted until late in the fall, and the December snows were lying white upon the ground before he was able to get out of doors; and then he traveled about but very little, so great was his fear of meeting with Ruby Gordon.

"Do not let her come here again, Lawrence he would often say: "the sight of her now would crush out what little life I have left."

And Lawrence, as he noted his increased feebleness, felt that he was so. He had brooded over his strange fancies until his mind was absolutely under the control of them and his health broken. Some sudden shock now might be fatal.

Of course, Ruby had to be informed of all this. It was Lawrence, himself, who told her, and with many fine expressions that came over her face when she learned that of all but the doors of the grand house where she had once thought to reign as a happy wife were to be actually closed against her.

It had been arranged that she was to go to Lawrence's home as a guest. It afforded him a chance to shield her from any occasionally, of hearing his voice, and of sometimes meeting her on his own eyes telling her that she was not forgotten. All this was over now, and her loneliness would be greater for it.

Lawrence understood the thoughts that were passing through her mind.

"Bessie and I will visit you here in your own home," he said to her, "sometimes, and perhaps some day my father may be cured of his morbid fancies."

They were sitting by the gateway which led to the Gordon cottage while talking. Lawrence was on his way to the station and, seeing Ruby, he had stopped to tell her of the happenings in the mansion.

Ruby was resting one hand on the gatepost and looking down. Lawrence's eyes caught the glitter of the diamond ring which she was wearing, and instantly his mind reverted to the time when he had given it to her.

He stooped and closely examined the ring. "Have you any recollection of your mother, Ruby?" he asked. "You were a child of four or five years old when she died; you must remember something about her."

"Yes, I have a fine recollection of my beautiful mother. She was tall and stately, with fresh, dark eyes that always seemed to me to be full of tears. She was always sad; I do not remember that I ever saw her smile."

"And you have nothing but this ring that once belonged to her?"

"Nothing else. How unfortunate that I lost the letter which she gave me. I have thought more about this lately than I ever did before. I feel that in the losing of that letter my whole life has been changed. My mother certainly knew the people to whom she sent that letter, and I have often wished her having ever heard her utter in Arkansas. I am sure I have heard her speak that name. You know at the time that I, in my childish ignorance, thought that it was Mr. Armytage to whom it was sent. But when one comes to think about it, it is quite clear that it was not. That she never would have sent me, a little child, to a stern, silent, moody, solitary man, living as he then was."

Lawrence was not so sure of this. Since the finding of that old portrait many fancies had filled his mind. Not so much because of the remembrance of Ruby's ring seemed to him to be the very one which the pictured lady had worn.

"Had your mother any relatives that you can remember hearing her speak of—any brothers or sisters?"

"No; I believe that she was quite alone in the world. The person to whom I was sent I have been told by a friend, some one whom she had known in her youthful days, and who had forgotten her."

Lawrence was puzzled. That Ruby was in some way related to the late Mrs. Armytage he had come to believe. He also believed that Reuben Armytage was the person to whom the letter was to be sent. Her mother might have been a sister of Mrs. Armytage, and, knowing her to be dead, and her child also, what more natural than that she should write to the only other one she might give to her friendless child the place within his home which his own daughter would have filled if she had lived.

But he decided that he would say nothing of this to Ruby at present. It could do no good and it might awaken within her mind thoughts and fancies that would make her still more wretched than she was now.

After his father had grown better he would take Ruby with him and show her and see if he would recognize it as the one that once belonged to his wife. With that ring as a clue, it was just possible that something might yet be learned of the poor girl's history.

Ruby's life, now that she could no longer visit at Elmwood, was one of dull monotony. Society had no charm for her now. She received invitations as usual to all the balls and parties that were given in the village that winter, but she attended only a few.

Leslie Darrell had long since ceased to trouble her with his love. He had come to the conclusion at last that he could never win her; indeed, he hardly knew now whether he cared to do so. Sometimes he wondered to himself if the desire to win her from Lawrence had not been greater than his love in the first place.

He had always envied Lawrence, always felt that he was a hindrance to his happiness in many ways. Were it not for him, he himself, would one day inherit Elmwood, as he was the next of kin to Reuben Armytage. This of itself was enough to awaken within the breast of such a person such as Leslie Darrell feelings of envy and jealousy. Added to this was the fact that Lawrence had won the love of the girl whose hand he had sought; and that girl, even now that Lawrence was lost to her, still loved him with an undying love and scorned him with like intensity.

But Lawrence should not always triumph. He was the one who was ruining his happiness; his proud spirit should be humbled and his boasted honor stained and blackened. This was the thought that filled his soul to accomplish this, he must give up all thoughts of Ruby Gordon and seek to woo as his wicked spell around one who was nearer if not dearer to the one whom he sought to humble—Bessie Armytage.

Bessie had, during the summer, avoided Leslie Darrell as much as possible. She knew that some evil of him she also knew that he was not to be trusted in his feelings. But this gradually wore away. Darrell was a handsome man and possessed in a manner that would attract the most extreme. He was an excellent conversationalist. This was his strongest point. He was a mine his wit and genius.

When Lawrence next returned to her Western home she and Bessie had a long talk together. Bessie told her the secret of her heart, and Lawrence was not surprised to learn that she was already acquainted with the fact that Leslie Darrell had confessed his wickedness. And as Addie Vincent had also confessed to Bessie that she, too, was made to feel that he had intended no wrong.

They also came to believe that he and her sister loved each other. There was a look of joy upon Addie's face after his name was there in the old days, a look of dreamy happiness. Both of their love could have brought it there; and as Darrell was loved by her side, it was but natural that she should look upon him favorably.

So, believing that this man was one day to be her brother, she no longer looked against the admiration which she, in spite of herself, felt for him; and when he called, as he often did, every evening, it was seen she gave him a cordial welcome.

Leslie was quick to take notice of this. He had taken it upon himself, during his visits to Elmwood, to look after the business affairs of the estate; so it came that, without interference, during those dreary winter afternoons when he was alone, seeking to drown all thoughts of his troubles in the companionship of Bessie, he made his home, whiling away the hours with the fascinating young lady.

So in this way the weeks and months drifted by, nothing of importance taking place until the early spring weather came, then with the coming of the summer there came to Lawrence Armytage a letter with a little child.

He found that they had something to live for now. And that summer was a peaceful if not a happy one to the inmates of the old Elmwood mansion.

Reuben Armytage had never regained his old-time health and strength. Nothing could cure him of his nervous fancies which had grown more and more alarming.

Lawrence never forgot the manner in which he received the news of the baby's birth. For a moment a look of fear and a look of intense joy which gradually died away, and was succeeded by a tenderness so sad that Lawrence at once knew that his thoughts were busy with the long ago.

"A little girl, did you say, Lawrence?" in a trembling voice; "a little daughter! Ah, me, I had hoped that God in his mercy would give unto my care a little girl! Through my influence I could, often wonder if she will be restored to me on the judgment Day; shall I have her with me throughout the ages?" Then, with a little innocent baby!

"I must see this child, Lawrence," he continued, after a moment's silence. Then as Lawrence started him to the room which had been fitted up as a nursery, and he bent over the cot where the little one was sleeping, his countenance grew pale even and dropped on the little dimpled face; and when he looked up again, turned away, he was heard to say as though in prayer, "Oh, God of Heaven, some day give me back my baby!"

CHAPTER XI.

An uneventful year rolled by. Addie Vincent, who was to have visited them again that summer, was prevented from doing so by the illness of her father, and baby Ruth was one year old before she found it possible to come.

Bessie was changed. The old listless expression of her face had been replaced by an animated look that made her appear as she did in the days before her marriage. Her manner of indifference was gone, and she seemed to be ever in a state of nervous expectancy.

Addie noted this as soon as the first greetings were over, and wondered at it.

But she attributed the change to the baby, and as Bessie led the way to the nursery where she was to see the "dearest, nicest, sweetest baby in the world," Addie remarked:

"Mamma was so pleased that you gave it her name; I wonder that Lawrence did not want to name it Ruby."

She watched Bessie closely to note the effect of her words. She gave her head a little toss, and a scornful smile flashed for a moment round her lips.

"He did propose," she answered, "that we should name her Reubena—for his father, he said; but I saw through the ruse at once. The name would soon have been shortened into Ruby, and I told him so; I also told him decidedly that I would not have it."

"Ah! yes," Addie concluded, "Bessie was outraged." But her air of independence gave an added charm to her beauty.

Presently she asked: "How is she—Ruby Gordon? You have said nothing about her in your letters lately."

"She is well, I believe, but I see her but seldom. You know papa will not have her name now. She has never been in the house since the night we had that terrible scene. You know I explained everything to you at the time—how Lawrence had brought it to entertained concerning her. Those fancies have never left him and he will not even mention her name in his hearing. Lawrence is one time thought that he would try to solve the mystery of the ring, but he has never dared to broach the subject to the poor afflicted one, for the excitement such the doctor has warned us that the least excitement might be fatal."

"Then you do not visit her at the cottage?"

"Oh, yes, occasionally. But her melancholy looks and ways always give me a strange feeling. I fear that she has been praying for me to die and is wondering why the Lord does not answer her prayers."

Addie laughed.

"And you," she questioned, "are not your prayers filled with the same petition concerning her?"

"No; I should not care if she lived forever!"

She said this in such an indifferent tone that Addie again regarded her with a wondering look. Had she ceased to care for Lawrence, and sorrow and disappointment hardened her heart to such a degree that nothing could grieve her now?

They had reached the nursery, and Bessie, feeling that her sister was regarding her with a scrutinizing look, began to talk about the baby in order to hide her confusion.

But after baby had been caressed, admired and petted, they seated themselves by the fire and Addie resumed the subject.

"Why do you not inquire about Darrell? I know you are dying to do so."

"Yes," returned Addie in a slow, hesitating way, "I should like to hear about him. Has he gone? Does he know of my coming? thing outside the window and she appeared to be thinking deeply. Presently she resumed: "His letters to me have ceased altogether of late. Has he a new sweetheart, Bessie?"

Although Addie spoke in a jesting manner, there was a tone of sadness and pain in her words that Bessie could not fail to notice.

"She loves him yet," she thought, and a sentence took form a moment overspread her face. Then presently she said:

"Were you actually engaged, Addie? I should like to know, if you do."

"I know of no reason why I should not tell you," she replied. "Of course you will never mention what I say to a living soul. We were not really engaged, but he, in many ways, led me to believe that he loved me and that he meant to ask me to be his wife. But can I say that I do now? He has evidently changed his mind, and it is to be much the same as yours, I fear, cursed with a hopeless love."

"Nonsense!" and Bessie broke off in confusion. "There is an unjudging reason that may be true; it might never die Leslie, you know. Do you suppose, Addie, that you would continue to love him, if you knew him to be unworthy?"

"What do you mean, Bessie?" "Why do you talk in that way? What has he done?"

"Nothing; but I wish you to look at the matter in a common sense way. It is nonsense to suppose that one's love is spoiled because one happens to love some one who does not return love. Why should it be that way, but—I—" She broke off in confusion, and Addie resumed: "Just make up your mind that you don't care for him before you are aware of the fact, you will have found yourself in the right."

"Then you are speaking from experience, Bessie," said Addie's face pictured the surprise that she felt at the admission.

"Partly," Bessie returned. "What kind of a life do you think I should lead if I ever thought that my husband loved another better than me? Lawrence continually! I tell you, Addie, such things can be gotten along with better than we think."

"But about Leslie Darrell—his interests in life, as you just said? What did you mean? How will he succeed?" Addie asked with much deep interest that it takes the place of your husband's love if so, what is it?"

Again Bessie looked confounded and for a moment did not answer; then suddenly turning to her sister she danced it below her sister's face and asked in a playful tone: "Need you ask?"

Addie shook her head.

"You love the baby, of course; but naturally your love for it would but deepen the desire for its father's love. I cannot understand you, Bessie; you are greatly changed."

That evening Leslie Darrell called.

It so happened that Bessie was engaged, but he was told by the servant who answered his ring that Miss Vincent was in the drawing-room.

He had not heard of her arrival, and in the surprise of the moment a sense of pleas-

ure thrilled his heart which puzzled him. Could it be that he really loved her? The next instant his face clouded. Would not her coming interfere with his plans? For Leslie Darrell was scheming and plotting again—in fact, he had been for a long time, and the time was nearly at hand for the consummation of his deeply-laid plot. He was to stain the name of Armytage with dishonor and make it impossible for Lawrence to ever find peace again.

He entered the drawing-room, and finding no one, he passed through into the conservatory beyond; and as his eyes rested on a lovely golden-haired woman in white standing over the flowers, he was obliged to own to himself that, as far as a nature like his was capable of loving, he could love this girl if he would but allow himself to do so—better than he had ever loved Ruby Gordon.

There was a sad, dreamy look on her sweet face, and as he uttered her name she did not look surprised. She had been dreaming of him and the dream had come true.

"I was afraid of you," she said, as she advanced to meet him. There was no embarrassment in her manner as she gave him her hand, but the sadness deepened on her face.

For once in his life Leslie Darrell came very near to giving way to a good impulse. He was for the moment strongly inclined to give up what he called his "vengeance on a perverse generation," and to take this sweet, dear girl in his arms, kiss away the saddened look and ask her to be his wife. Ah, had he but done so, how different life would have been for all!

But the old spirit of the evil in his nature triumphed; his good angel took flight, and the door of his heart was once again closed on that was pure and holy in life—against even love itself.

He signed, nevertheless, for he fully realized what he was doing; and Addie wondered at the flash of triumph that lighted up his face, and looked on it as a sign that he was pleased to see her. Her heart beat quickly at the look which she read upon her, a look of mingled love, and delight.

He was still holding her hand and he could not resist the temptation to press it to his lips. The act caused a blush of confused happiness to Addie's face which did not escape the notice of the watching hyena within his, he led her to a divan and seated himself beside her. Although she could never be his wife, he should not deny himself the pleasure of her society.

"A thought came to me as the wrong he was doing her in thus leading her to believe that he loved her, but it was selfish in him, as in all things else; he cared not that grief would sorrow over the ruin of one so pure, sensitive heart when she learned of his base unworthiness.

In after years Addie liked to remember that night with its few intensely happy hours. For the present but in Leslie Darrell's manner that plainly revealed his admiration and love, and feeling sure as she could not have done, and feeling sure as she did not for ever dream, that before the summer was over he would ask her to be his wife.

But after he had bidden her good-night, seeing that she was tired, which pained and distressed her.

Then he had gone at once to her own room, but feeling too blissfully happy to sleep, she seated herself by the window and gazed dreamily out into the moonlight. She could see Darrell's tall figure going slowly across the lawn, and when he paused in the shadow of one of the old elms, and, after looking cautiously around, as though afraid about him for a moment as though he was expecting some one to meet him there.

Several minutes passed. Darrell was leaning against the tree and in a wondering way Addie watched him. Suddenly when, at length, another moving object attracted her attention. A tall, dark-robed figure glided swiftly over the dew-bespangled grass until it reached Darrell's side, then, turning, stood for a second with her face uplifted to the moonlight, gazing back toward the house.

It was Ruby Gordon!

What did it mean?

Addie asked again Addie asked herself this question: Why had her sister gone out to meet Darrell alone at this hour of the night? A foreboding of evil came to her and a dismal foreboding of coming ever filled her heart.

She gazed now as though fascinated. Darrell's head was bent and the fair, pale face was close to Bessie's; his arms were clasped about her and her head was resting over against his shoulder. They remained thus for several minutes, then Bessie's face was raised to his and their lips met in a long, lingering kiss; then Darrell released her and went swiftly down the avenue and Bessie glided back toward the house.

Sadly Addie Vincent turned away from the window. There was a horrified expression on her face, and a feeling of dumb, inward suffering in her heart. She knew her awakened happiness had received a sudden death blow from Bessie.

"Can it be possible," she asked herself, "that they are false—both false? If so, then, Lawrence Armytage, Heaven pity you and me!

CHAPTER XII.

During the next few days Addie watched her sister closely that she might, if possible, learn the meaning of that midnight scene on the lawn; she also noted every word and expression that passed between her and her husband, but there was nothing in the manner of either to denote that there was any trouble between the two.

Lawrence was, in that calm, undemonstrative way of his, kind and courteous as he had ever been, and Bessie received his kindness in a like manner.

And yet, to the keen observer, there was that in her manner which denoted a restless state of mind. She flitted from room to room trying to busy herself with first one thing, then another, but finding nothing that interested her for long at a time. She seemed to constantly crave excitement of some kind or other; as for leisure and quiet, she never sought these now.

"How beautiful the old place is!" said Addie one morning as she and Bessie were walking together in the garden. "God has made a beautiful world for us to dwell in, and I often wonder if earth can be so fair that it must Heaven be?"

Bessie sighed.

"There can be no heaven for me, neither in this world or the next," she said." And again that creepy, horrified feeling came over Addie as she listened to the strange and sadly-spoken words.

"Bessie, how changed you are!" And Addie's voice expressed the horror that she felt. "You used to be so gentle and loving, and given to holy thoughts; now you are cold, hard and—reckless! Why should there be such a change?"

"Because I shall not seek it! I cannot! To do this, one must be as you say, gentle and tender and given to holy thoughts. It is a long story. I cherished a holy thought; a long while since I dared to pray, but what would be the use? I used to pray, but the thing that I longed for most I never given me! The sweet fancies which we cherish in our youth are seldom realized. For a while we are crushed with disappointed hopes, but we rise again, with a mind cleared from vague and visionary dreams, and filled with everything but a reckless sense of the hard cold, stern realities of life! Do not look so shocked, Addie, this is true, and when one finds out the truth in regard to life, it is with a feeling of recklessness, and with a craving for excitement, in which to drown and bury sweet memories, which must not be allowed to live, make our lives unendurable.

"Do you know, Bessie Armytage, you are talking the greatest nonsense? What makes you say such things? You have made me very unhappy dear child."

Bessie laughed, but there was no mirth in her laughter.

"Don't scold, Addie," she said, turning her head away that her sister might not see the tears that had suddenly dimmed her eyes. "You, too, may one day realize the awful bitterness of life."

This was but too true; Addie knew it. Already she had begun to realize that the sweet hopes which she had cherished were to be buried forever, that the fruits of disappointment were to be her lot.

She did not answer at once, and when she did, her voice was pervaded by a pitiful little sigh that did not escape Bessie's notice.

"It seems to me, Bessie," she said, as she nervously pulled the leaves from a beautiful rose that she had plucked, "that whatever you utter, you have grown cold, heartless and reckless. When you speak of realizing the awful bitterness of life I know to what you allude, and I own that its bitterness indeed to feel that one must put away forever the first and best love of one's heart; but I have suffered a cruel disappointment. But if disappointment comes to me—and I feel that it will—I shall not lay the blame on others' shoulders, nor will I sell my immortal soul for a few years of pleasurable sin in order to forget it!"

Bessie laughed.

"Who said anything of pleasurable sin?" she asked."What do you mean by that?" Then, leaning on Addie's shoulder and looking with a searching gaze, she continued: "It seems to me that I have been talking nonsense."

She laughed as she said this, but the sudden nervousness which her manner betrayed filled Addie's heart with a vague alarm. Bessie's face flush which suddenly covered the beautiful face a blush of guilty shame! Did some great danger really threaten the sweet sister who had grown so utterly reckless? Again she thought of that scene on the lawn and shuddered. A presentiment of coming evil seemed to weigh her down, and a feeling of despair seemed to be whispering in her ears: "Sne is in deadly peril—save her!"

As she made no reply to her sister's words Bessie, after a moment, said:

"Stop dreaming of Heaven, Addie; it is too uncertain; bring your thoughts back to earth, and let us plan to have a jolly good time this summer. God only knows where we may be next year. I have learned that one gets more real pleasure from life if one lives in the present only. I have done with the past; and I shall waste no thoughts on the future."

And again a mirthless laugh sounded from her lips. Then suddenly her eyes brightened and her face took on an animated look.

"See!" she exclaimed, "here comes Leslie Darrell. Now we will plan for the picnic which he spoke of the other night."

Love and distrust battled fiercely within the tender heart of Addie Vincent as the man whom she loved so dearly and whose honor she had come to doubt, advanced to where they were sitting.

He bowed pleasantly and extended to Addie his hand.

Mechanically she placed her own within it. Could it be possible that he was false and villainous; that he was trying to lure her beloved sister into wickedness and shame? For this was the fear which had come upon her, and her eyes must have revealed something of her thoughts, for he gave her a keen, observant look, and a wondering expression came over his face. Then he drew her hand hastily away as he sought to retain it for a moment within his own.

"I am glad you have come," Bessie remarked, "Addie was just preaching at me, and you know how I hate being preached at. She fancies that I have grown to be hard, cold, cruel, cynical, worldly, reckless and wicked."

Darrell laughed.

"One's preaching would have to be very effective, I imagine," he said, seating himself on the garden seat beside them, "to teach a heart filled with so many vices. Were you converted?"

"No; but I feel condemned."

He spoke as one addressed in the same jesting tone in which she had previously spoken, but Addie could not fail to observe that Darrell was watching her closely, and that her reply appeared to make him feel uneasy.

"Would it be a fair question to ask, Miss Vincent, what you have been preaching about?"

"In the village as usual, looking over those old musty records. It strikes me that there are a great many accounts to be looked after concerning the estate."

Darrell whipped a flower from its stem with his cane, then in a suggestive tone asked: "Do you really think that he is in the village all the time that he claims to be there?"

Bessie gave him a surprised look. "Why, my dear," she answered, in a slow, hesitating way, "Where else would he be?"

"What indeed?" and Darrell smiled meaningly as he shrugged his shoulders. "Some one was standing at a little rustic gate and down the road here as I came past, and watching for some one; it could not have been me, I suppose."

All this jarred painfully on Addie's senses. What he meant to infer was, that Lawrence spent part of his time with Ruby Gordon, and she did not believe that he did any such thing. But Bessie—what would she think about it?

She glanced quickly at her sister; but her face revealed nothing of her thoughts, and she was speaking as she was left to wonder as to whether she believed this or not.

"The picnic, you know, Addie," she recent shrank from anything like deceit or treachery. She had seen this man with his arms around her sister's waist on the dark of another; she had seen their lips meet in an unholy kiss; now she heard him, with what she believed to be false and deceiving words, plotting against her sister's peace against her husband. Merciful Heaven! could it be possible that it was to such a man that she had given her heart?

For a moment she seemed to recoil from him with a feeling of horror; the next instant he turned the full gaze of his great magnetic eyes upon her, and under the influence of that gaze she began to question herself as to whether what she had seen could be true, or had it not been a miserable dream?

"I would give the world to know what thoughts are passing in your mind, Miss Vincent," he said carelessly, never once removing his eyes from her face; "you look as solemn and serious as a judge." Then, assuming a graver tone, he asked: "Have I displeased you?"

Bessie had risen and was gathering roses for the dining-room table. Addie glanced toward her, then in a low tone answered, in that candid, truthful way of hers:

"Yes, I did not like the way in which you spoke of Lawrence just now. Even if what you inferred were true—and I do not believe that it is—it would have been more gentlemanly to have kept the knowledge to yourself. Why should you wish to make trouble between Bessie and her husband?"

Bessie had completed her bouquet and was coming back to where they were sitting. Darrell was glad of this, as he knew not how to answer the question which had been asked him. Addie's candor had surprised him; the reproach in her tone had made him feel uncomfortable. Base and unprincipled though he was, he had great respect for honest truthfulness in others, and her words so fearlessly spoken made him realize her purity of heart, her holiness of purpose and her priceless worth. Never had he loved as he at this moment loved this girl who had made him feel that he was a coward.

No word did he speak; but he caught her hand and raised it to his lips; as he did so, a feeling of unworthiness was strong upon him.

"I wish you would take these roses up to the house and arrange them in vases and bring me a pencil and some note paper," said Bessie as she advanced, bowing them. "I wish to make a list of the people whom we are to invite to the picnic. I would go myself, but I feel tired."

But to Addie she appeared nervous and agitated. Left to her own devices toward the house she wondered what had disturbed her.

She arranged the roses, secured the pencil and paper and brought them as she had been requested to Bessie and Darrell, pretending earnestly and seemed not to see her approaching, and as she drew near a few words fraught with evil reached her ears, filling her ears with a vague, shrinking fear and dread.

"I saw you kissing her hand," she was saying, "and naturally I am thinking that you love her; and I tell you, Leslie Darrell, that I will not have it! You shall not deceive her further—she will confide in me after I'm dead. Besides, I must be all the world to you or nothing!"

Another installment of this highly interesting story will appear in next week's Ledger, leading to some very remarkable developments. The free premiums of cameras, books, etc., are still open to new subscribers as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Queer Natural History.

There exists a sworn statement describing a fight at sea between a whale and a sea serpent. Before the Liverpool shipowners' association the captain and members of the Pauline declaring that on July 8, 1875, when in latitude 3 degrees 30 minutes south, 35 degrees west, they observed three large sperm whales, "one of which was gripped round the body with long coils of what appeared to be a huge serpent." The head and tail of the serpent was also beyond the coils of about thirty feet and its girth seemed about eight or nine feet. "The serpent whirled its victim round and round for about fifteen minutes, and suddenly dragged the whale to the bottom, head first." The evidence went on to state that the same crew saw a similar scene on July 13 in the same year swimming along the surface, "the head and neck being out of the water several feet."

Captain Sverdrup, the Arctic explorer, tells how one of his dogs, named Kari, fell ill during the winter and showed all the appetite—a thing almost unheard of in an Eskimo dog. Kari was the most valuable dog and a wise one, and therefore Karl was petted by his master. She crept round in a ball and lay down close by one of her comrades, between his legs, where she would be sure to get a little warmth. This, however, was not at all to the mind of the dog in question, and he was ungallant enough to get up and change his place. But Kari was too ill to notice this discourtesy. She took her allowance, went up to the dog in question and put it down with her nose, as much as to say, 'Here, this is for you; now do be kind and let me lie quiet!' Then she licked the face in a friendly way and curled herself round again in her old place. This time she was really allowed to remain in peace."

On April 6 at the zoological gardens, Manchester, England, a python laid fifty eggs over the heat inlet of her cage and is now incubating, being coiled about them. The eggs, which are shell-like, are about the size of a turkey's, are ditty white in color and in texture like parchment.

Misfit.

Cyril—Ah, there, fawther, how do you like me new padded coat?

Cyril's Papa—You want your head padded to match, that's all.

Landed.

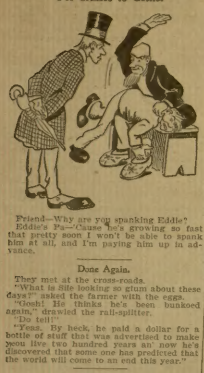
He courteously)—Are you angry?

She (firmly)—Yes, I am.

"Because I kissed you?"

"Be—because you stopped." (No cards.)

For Crimes to Come.



Friend—Why are you spanking Eddie?
Eddie's Pa—'Cause he's growing so fast that pretty soon I won't be able to spank him at all, and I'm paying him up in advance.

Done Again.

They met at the cross-roads.
"What is Silo looking so glum about these days?" asked the farmer with the eggs.
"Gosh! He thinks he's been bunkoed again," drawled the rail-splitter.
"Do tell!"
"Yes. By heck, he paid a dollar for a bottle of stuff that was advertised to make 'em live two hundred years an' now he's discovered that some one has predicted that the world will come to an end this year."

Slick Chap.

Silas—Why is Rube Ryetop marching about with so many airs?
Cyrus—He wants people to know that he is smart enough to be mixed up in the post-office frauds.
Silas—Do tell!
Cyrus—Yes, it's a fact. He got a letter two months ago with postage due on it an' he ain't ever paid the 2 cents yet.

Ordered by Mail.

Flyer—Frogs' legs bring a good price in market, don't they?
Friend—I believe so.
"Then I suppose money might be made in raising frogs?"
"Possibly; but why do you ask?"
"Oh, nothing; only some time ago I bought a corner lot in Boom City, and I've just been out to see it."

His Narrow Escape.

"It has come to my care," remarked Miss DePayne, "that you said my face would make a man climb a fence."
"Yes; that's what I said," replied the diplomatic man, "but, of course, I meant if he happened to be on the other side of the fence."

Society Shocked.

Mrs. Highstyle (at a fashionable party)—Oh, oh, oh! That horridly vulgar Miss Psyche is here.
Mrs. Freestyle—I do not know her.
Mrs. Highstyle—You need not want to. The coarse creature shamelessly says that she is going to marry for love.

Chance for Inventors.

New Arrival—Me leg's most broke. I've heard th' Amerykins was a nation av inventors, but, bedad, it don't look loike it.
Friend—Phwy not?
New Arrival—Sure, phwy hov'n't they invented a coalhole that will shtay shut phwin it's open?

Had a Smart Husband.

Daughter—Did you find out what it was that papa cut out of the paper?
Mother—Yes, I bought another copy. I've read it all through, but I can't see anything wrong about it. It's an article on the healthfulness of housework.

Nothin' Doin'.

"No, I'll not give you a chance to throw me over," said young Soapkins. "You are too slow to make a monkey out of me."
"Too late, you mean," she answered in a tone softer than butter in August.

A Mean Man.

Winkers—Talking about mean men, do you know Binkers?
Minkers—Is he mean?
Winkers—Mean! Mean is no name for it. Why, that fellow is mean enough to put his name on an umbrella.

Rather Embarrassing.

Ida—And they say Mabel's father was forced to remain in the house while the wedding procession passed.
May—Yes; some one threw the only pair of shoes he owned at the bridal party.

Undoubtedly.

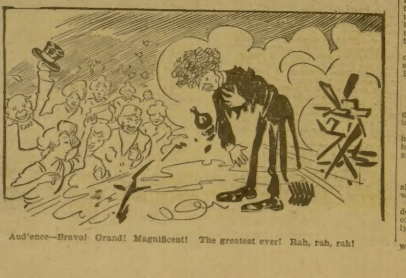
Her—It must have been awfully hard to wear those old coats of mail.
Him—Yes, indeed. They have all the appearance of hardware.

The man who likes to sit and dream,
Whose life is never sunny,
Has always got a little scheme,
But never any money.

Sig. Bangsmashi's Rival—Ha! I will put a bomb in the piano and when that miscreant performs he will be abolished! Ha!

Sig. Bangsmashi (aside)—Now I attack the crescendo and approach the grand climax! Oh, for some supernatural power!

(Boom!"



Audience—Bravo! Grand! Magnificent! The greatest ever! Rah, rah, rah!

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WE SHIP ON APPROVAL without a cent deposit and allow 10 DAYS FREE TRIAL on every bicycle. Any wheel not satisfactory returned at our expense.

Highest grade **$8.75 to $17** 1904 Models

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Over a million cases of disease in every form are now to the credit of Christian Science Healing. Most of these were cases that the doctors had given up as "incurable." Many more were chronic maladies that had baffled their skill for years. All were quickly cured; some were cured instantly. The evidence on these facts is simply indisputable and the curing still goes on. There can be no mistake or misstatement about it. The healers and their work are in public view. As a C. S. healer my many marvelous cures have startled the world. During the past 12 years I have healed diseases of almost every known kind and in every stage of severity. They included many surgical cases where operations were otherwise threatened. I cured cases that were far away from me, as well as those near at hand. And I tell you in the manner that wherever you may dwell, whether one or many physicians have failed to give you relief, if you report the case to me and so desire, you shall be cured. This is no vain or idle promise. My past success fully justifies it. You can be cured whether you believe in Christian Science or not. You can be cured whether in this city or thousands of miles away from me. In our Christian Science Healing distance is of no account; disbelief is not any hindrance; disappointments of the past only make stronger grounds for hope. All you really need is the wish to be healed.

I have just published a little book in regard to this blessed truth called "A Message of Health and Healing." If you write to me I will gladly send you a copy free. It gives many interesting facts and convincing testimonials. Enclose 2-cent stamp for postage. S. A. Jefferson, C. S. B., Suite 604, 113 Dearborn street, Chicago, Ill.

Quite Different.

Binks—How does Jones' wife treat him?
Banks—Like a dog.
Binks—Cur?
Banks—No; poodle.

Tennyson Scandalized.

(After Lockeley Hall.)

Comrades, leave me here a little, for I've got an awful load;
Leave me here until a copper comes and gets me, a la mode.

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

Proper Thing.

"In society," said the young bud, "the gentleman is always presented to the lady, is he not?"
"Yes," replied the heiress who was doing her second season, "unless he happens to have a title, then one must pay for him, I suppose."

Cause and Effect.

"I understand they have some stunning shows on the Pike," said the St. Louis woman.
"I guess that's right," replied her next-door neighbor. "My husband visited some of them last night and came home paralyzed."

Vanity is the quicksand that ingulfs a woman's reason.

A BACK LICK

Settled the Case With Her.

Many great discoveries have been made by accident and things better than gold mines have been found in this way; for example, when even the accidental discovery that coffee is the real cause of one's sickness proves of most tremendous value because it locates the cause and the person has then a chance to get well.

"For over 25 years," says a Missouri woman, "I suffered untold agonies in my stomach and even the best physicians disagreed as to the cause without giving me any permanent help, different ones saying it was gastritis, indigestion, neuralgia, etc., so I dragged along from year to year, always half sick, until finally I gave up all hopes of ever being well again.

"When taking dinner with a friend one day she said she had a new drink which turned out to be Postum and I liked it so well I told her I thought I would stop coffee for awhile and use it, which I did.

"So for three months we had Postum in place of coffee without ever having one of my old spells, but was always healthy and vigorous instead.

"Husband kept saying he was convinced it was coffee that caused those spells, but even then I wouldn't believe it until one day we got out of Postum and as we lived two miles from town I thought to use the coffee we had in the house.

"The result of a week's use of coffee again was that I had another terrible spell of agony and distress, proving that it was the coffee and nothing else. That settled it, and I said good bye to Coffee forever and since then Postum alone has been our hot mealtime drink.

"My friends all say I am looking worlds better and my complexion is much improved. All the other members of our family have been benefited, too, by Postum in place of the old drink, coffee." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Ten days' trial of Postum in place of coffee or tea is the wise thing for every coffee drinker. Such a trial tells the exact truth often where coffee is not suspected.

Look in each package for the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

Asked and Answered.

"What is love?" asked the sweet girl who was looking for a chance to loap.

"Love," replied the old bachelor, 'is a kind of insanity that makes a man call a 200-pound feminine his little turtle dove."

Feminine Self-Control.

She—Miss Powderly certainly has wonderful self-control.

He—Indeed!

She—Yes; she could tell lots of things that happened thirty years ago, but she doesn't.

Natural Sequence.

Mrs. Homer—Have you noticed how weary and worn Mrs. Goodwin looks of late?

Mrs. Neighbors—Yes, poor thing; she has quit doing her own work and is trying to keep a hired girl.

Fatal Oversight.

Lazy Low—De guy wot invented work made one bad mistake.

Tired Tim—Wot was dat?

Lazy Low—He went an' died afore he got it finished.

HE HAD NOTICED IT.

Doctor—During the spring months it is natural for people to have a sluggish feeling.

Mr. Hen Peck. I know it. My wife is affected that way. She slugged me twice this morning.

A Matter of Interest.

Cholly—Oh, no! The widow is not handsome.

Perdy—But is she interesting?

Cholly—Deucedly so—to a chap as heavily in debt as I am.

Evidently Not.

"They say Nibley saves just half of his income every year."

"How does that happen? Have they no neighbors that Nibley's wife doesn't outshine?"

Very Shocking.

Rodrick—This paper says that some things at St. Louis are so large they really appall the visitor.

Van Albert—H'm! They must mean the hotel bills.

Two Victims.

Sailor—I was shipwrecked in midocean, and nearly died of thirst.

Landsman—I can sympathize mit you. Vonce I vas railroad wrecked in a prohibition State.

Deadly Weapons.

Rawhide Rube—What are these here magazine guns, anyhow?

Hairtrigger Hank—Oh, I s'pose they are the weapons them editors have to plug poets with.

LARGE ORDER.

Mrs. Chatters—Well, my dear Mrs. Monk, what are you doing with all that wire fence netting?

Mrs. Monk—Making a peekaboo waist for Miss Hippo.

Taking No Chances.

"You should send your offspring to college," said one of those people who will always advise. "You don't want to be ashamed of your children, do you?"

"No, by heck!" drawled the old farmer in red-topped boots. "An' I don't want to send them to college an' have them come back an' be ashamed of me, either."

Round-Trip Excursions.

The Friend—Why do you call these verses "Poems of Travel"?

The Poet (sadly)—Because they have been traveling around for the last five years.

One of Many.

Diggs—Young Flasherton reminds me of a turtle.

Biggs—What's the answer?

Diggs—Everything he has is on his back.

The Final Question.

Russian Emperor (nervously)—What news?

Official—Japan is anxious for peace.

Emperor (gloomily)—Y-e-s, but how big a piece?

Not Fit to Join.

First Fox-Hunter (at the American Meet Club)—Why did you blackball Winthrop?

Second Fox-Hunter—He says "hunt" instead of "'unt."

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HANS' BOXING LESSON.

BY JAMES B. LEWIS.

I hear so much dalk yoost now concerning der noble art of self-defense, dot I dink mit mineself it vos good for me to know how to use my visticuffs, like Bob Fitzsimmons or Chim Cheffries. Den I vould be able to knock spots out of de feller shtreet boys vot call me "a Dutch savage."

Therefore I determine I vould go to the man vot teach me de beginning vidit, und I dells mein frau und she says nien.

"Hans," she says to me, "I don't dink it vos right for a married man to know how to vight, because ven you make a row mit some one else mineself, got der vorsted of it."

"Vah, dot's a fact," vos mein reply, "but I don't dink dot vould do you much harm a few dimes for der cost of your health und a safer life. Anyvay, old woman, I go und have some exberience mit der bogsing lessons, yah."

I yourself directed to der adledic hall und shakering squdaney by a mans, und I go in. Dere a mans dere mit his two hands stuck into doo roun blum buddings mit der bandling plothe on, und he vas dancing around der room as mad as a lunatigal Murch hare, und der vos a big bag like a monster hang from de ceiling dry in de room, und dis lunatig vas hitting der bag mit his right-hand blum budding, und den his left-hand-blum-budding, und blowing mit his breath as veil, und every time his shadder der bag hard, he say:

"Dot's outo you! There is von in der dadder-dings dot knocks out your iveries. I'll put your beasters in mourning for you! Into your beasters in der gomb. Aha! dere's a pretty one right in your solar plexus, Mr. Sullivan!"

Ven he bersheves me he dance around me, und he looks as if he vould dramfer his adolescence from de end to de beginning, for he dash der blum buddings before mein eyes, und he say:

"Now, den, Bologna, put up your forgepoot or I'll hit you. Vee vill put de gloves der—say? Shall I hand you one on der kisser? Vere vill you have it?"

"Vot," he say, "feel it vas a bit mit it; und den I ask him if he vos der bugilistig broveser of de noble side of shelf-defense? He pood his right-hand blum-pudding over his left-hand breasht, und he bow und say he ven der honor to be him.

"Vell," I say to him, "I vant to get some bogsing lessons to vight mit a von dot vos der brice."

"Der gustomary charge," he say, "is tew dollars for six lessons, but as you are a shendleman dese parts I vill make you a dozen for five dollars, bayable in advance."

I say very good, und dot I vill commence at once; I say him dot I vill give him de nags me to feel his byzebs, und I looks all round und I see a vood pile, und I tell him I do no byzebs knocking round to feel mit.

"Vell," he say, "feel it vas, und he bend mit his elbow, und I feel his arm, und I find de der byzebs vas like a cast-iron vater-pibe, strong und hardness, but I vas for its skin. "I give you a byzebs like dot after you have der six lessons." he say; und I say yah, mit danks, dot I like dot.

I dake off mein coat mit mein vest-coat, und I put mien fists into two new blum puddings, like der bugilistic broveser of der noble art, und I holds dem up und shake at him like he shabe at me.

"Goom on," I say.

"Look out, den!" egshlaims der broveser, und I quickly recolect dot dere vas grand leading brinciples in vighting. Hit oud straight, hit oud quig, und hit oud hard. Dot vay dot vas some, und I vas yourself.

I hit oud straight, und quig, und hard mit mien fist to his nose, und I hit him straight, und quig, und hard mit mien mouf mit his nose.

I feel a big byzebs coming already on mein right hand, und I vas glad some bower.

"Look here, broveser," I say, "does you five dollars include der use of your gimnasium for new teeth?"

He laughed, und dell me to dry again dot I vas pooty fast, und dot I vill soon be able to fight Kid McCoy und Tom Sharkey, und he say I dinks so, also.

Ve shabes avay again, und I shut mien eyes, und I lash out mit both blum buddings straight, quig, und hard again, und den der vas a railway-drain collision ad mine left ear, und I vas strug mit lightning und thunder; und ven I open my eyes I vas grouched in a heap on de floor of de gymnastic hall und sparring academy. I dinks dere vas a million of us all knocked of de roof. Der brovessor grinsh all round his mout, und he asks me:

"Vy dear me, mine gevvilliam!" I say.

"How der divil can I keep him." I say, "when you knock all dem egvilibrium out ov mien earhole mit a sledge hammer?"

He lift me up, und shakes some more, und he taps me on der nose, und he breag der backbone of it. Den he puts up a handkerchief to it, und he vipes it a bit, und he shows me how to dry in der room. Und dis lunatig vas hitting der bag mit his right-hand blum buddings, und den his left-hand-blum-buddings, und blowing mit his breath as veil, und every time his shadder der bag hard, he say:

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"Vy dear me, mine gevvilibrium?"

"How der divil can I keep him," I say, "when you knock all dem egvilibrium out ov mien earhole mit a sledge hammer?"

He lift me up, und shakes some more, und he taps me on der nose, und he breag der backbone of it. Den he puts up a handkerchief to it, und he vipes it a bit, und he shows me how to dry in der room. Den he play handball mit mien head all round der room. He shifts mien two ears farder back on my head, und he finally toss in der medicine, und I dake a balloon journey somerset, und landed in shood half hour on der end of my breezy, und knocks my backbone through der buttonhole of my collar.

"I dink dot vill do for dis first lesson," he say.

"I dell him I dink so for a fact, and no mistake, und I say I don't know vich is mien top end, und vill he put me right side up mit mein head. I vill go home.

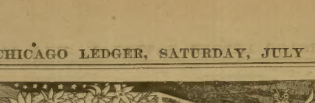
"Ven vill you have der second lesson?" he say. I was too bewilder to vorkee.

I told him I vas see shood it, but I don't vas got to keep mein business mit mein noble brovessor, for fear I lose mien appetite. I vas got me out of dot scrape p. d. q.

Bachelor's Friend.

Mrs. Stubb—John, I see "buttonless suspenders" advertised around the country.

Mr. Stubb—You don't say! By George! If it keeps up a man won't need any buttons sewed on and he won't have to get married.



THE CURSE OF THE GEISHA GIRL;

...OR...

FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION.

BY CONSTANCE BEATRICE WILLARD.

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CHAPTER XV.

"The distance between impure passion and spotless love is wider than the heavens."

And yet many men would have welcomed such a sight, a beautiful woman, clothed in pale green silk and lace, a much richer costume than she had had even when Mrs. Humphries wear, with the rich, heavy red hair gathered in great clusters upon the well-shaped head. The eyes glowed with an infernal fire, and the white hand was trembling, as one asked quietly:

"Will you spare me a moment?"

"You must pardon me, Mrs. Humphries, but I am on my way to attend to a very important matter, and those who had known Vincent longest would scarcely have recognized the low, tense voice.

"Mr. Vincent Lyndstock, I say. There are times in one's life when the destinies of many may be influenced by a feather's weight. I want to have a short conversation with you."

"And you force me, madam, to appear extremely rude."

"You will not refuse to talk with me?"

"You leave me no choice."

Her haughty demeanor looked up at him like some animal of the jungle, caught and not accustomed.

"Do you know that I am at least ten years your senior?"

"I had not, you permit me to pass?"

"No, I will not. You will have to raise your voice higher if there is anything I am going to tell you, and this is as near as I intend to come to you."

Vincent stood there with a hard, stern expression on his face, and about his clean person.

"Yes, I am ten years your senior. In the days of my youth I was a beauty, so I am told. They have been willing to cast everything aside for me."

"Again I must remind madam that a recital of past triumphs can have no interest for me," and there was a cutting tones of the young American.

"Mr. Lyndstock," repeated the woman, speaking in a low, intense voice, and yet the standing that it was impossible for him to pass unless he laid hands upon her, "that now, when I thought every fire of desire was burned out, when I have drunk of every pleasure the world holds, save one, and that one is unattainable, you have come me to drain the cup of gall to the bottom."

Vincent's eyes looked over her head. She might hold him there because of his chivalry to her sex, but she could not force him to look into her face.

"Yet I tell you, Vincent Lyndstock, if I drain the dregs, I shall drain them with you. One more chance I give you. Just one, and more suffering than you can imagine will be meted out to you. Will you stay with me, you?" and a pair of hands which had once been the envy of many famous clubs were stretched out to him, but the young man only said quietly and firmly:

"No; only result that this interview can have in that I am forced to request that you remain in your own apartments. My uncle can make other arrangements for you, and I have determined that I will no longer associate with my cousins any longer. Hitherto, I had hoped I had misunderstood you."

"Then you throw me utterly aside?"

"To do that you must first treat it occupy an entirely different position with regard to me, which you never could do," and the angry conclusion to his remark.

"The lady my uncle had placed over my cousins, and who was because of that entitled to my respect, and whom I have respected until quietly, then continued:

"I will not talk to him, dear, if you do not care." Rose replied, and Vincent knew that while she was grounded in principles she felt it were better she straighten out for herself, and that the strange tangle affairs were now in.

CHAPTER XVI.

"A love like mine was a challenge to fate."

"My darling, your life is going to be like one grand holiday, a dream of fun filled with brightness, flowers, jewels, joy and feastings. If I can help it, no sorrow will enter in, and we will live happily ever afterward, like the prince and princess in the fairy stories," Vincent said, drawing the statuesque Lillian into his arms.

Her many rods away, on a private veranda of the same hotel, Vincent said quietly, although intense feeling underlay the words:

"I want to try, dear, to diffuse some of your sweetness, for you are too noble a woman for me to expect to keep you entirely to myself. Still, there will be an inner life of which no one knows except us, and that will be sacred and help us both to expand."

At the same time a dark figure was crouching beneath the balcony of the drawing-room, where Vambrace and Lillian were sitting, and while he was whispering words of fondest love to the dainty girl, there suddenly came to them:

"Be to-day, there to-morrow; easily won, soon lost. Broken hearts and ruined souls follow in his wake, the haunted man of the geisha girl." Suddenly the words grew stronger and the voice louder, although it appeared to come from the very center of the room.

"Storms and tempests, rain and thunder, how his head to the earth. In all of them dwells the spirit of the geisha girl. Cursed be the day when first her eyes fell upon his handsome face; cursed be the day when he lured her away from home, for she was then a geisha girl; cursed be the day when his dead baby was thrown to the waves, for he, too, shall hound him; cursed be him forever and forever; cursed be all who clasp hands with him; cursed be his kisses, for they wither on the lips, and lay waste blooming cheeks; cursed be those who mate with him, for they shall bear tainted souls, and go down into the dark waters of oblivion, cursed be his name from generation to generation, forever and forever."

As suddenly as it commenced the baleful voice ceased, and with a sigh of relief Vambrace turned to the beautiful girl by his side, whose face was white as driven snow, her lips were pallid, and her eyes looked startled beyond expression.

"Darling, precious one, look at me, Lillian. Love you, sweetheart—you must look at me!"

Under his fierceness the color began to come back in cheeks and lips.

"I should have prepared you for this—have shielded you, but your love was to the test, but I really thought she had left."

"She has," came at length from the cupid bow's mouth.

"A geisha girl named Touki-San, from Yokohama."

"Why does she haunt you?" Lillian's voice was more like music now that her eyes were still startled.

"I cannot tell you now, dear; some day I may. Is not my love sufficient?"

The girl stood still, thinking deeply for a moment, then she answered:

"Uncle said he believed you were an honorable gentleman."

"What does my Lillian believe?" came in agonized accents.

"That I love you," was said shyly, but in his joy at having her in his arms again he overlooked the fact that she had not expressed any faith in him.

While this exciting scene was taking place Rose made her way to the room that Mr. Churchton used as a study and business office. She was a great reader and also transacted considerable business, and operated the safe, after the fire in the house into the face which had represented both father and mother to the young girl for so many years.

"Well, dear, want something?"

Rose crossed the room and perched herself upon her uncle's knee, as she replied:

"Not if your present occupation excludes."

The good man looked puzzled.

"Uncle, dearest, Vincent and I have caught the fever and want to get married."

Still did the look of bewilderment linger upon the face, as the old man stood which caressed the little fingers was exceedingly tender.

"We have found that our tastes and incliations are such that we will be happier if we spend our lives together."

"You mean that you and Vincent want to marry each other?"

"Yes, sir, if you please," and Rose gave a nervous little laugh, although she could see that the tears were not far from her eyes.

"Rose, do not make any mistake."

"I am not, dear uncle," and a pair of soft arms were thrown around his neck.

"My child, better live all your life unmarried than marry one whom you do not love."

The tears eyes filled with tears, then Rose said in a low tone:

"Uncle, Vincent and I have both been very unfortunate in love affairs, and our unhappiness was caused by a misunderstanding. We are young people, and so perhaps loved qualities more than persons. At any rate, I am satisfied with the affection I have for him, and he is with mine. Both of us are too honorable to marry unless we love with our whole heart. Lillian has given me a dear, highly-esteemed relative in you. Now, uncle, I would rest the feelings I once had, and which you, dear darling, saw, and am rejoicing in my love for you. Is not that the sweetest and sweet and tender that the gentleman felt who loved me, he held in the most tenderly favored of Heaven.

"I am content, my dear, if your heart is filled," he answered slowly. "But there is something I must tell you, dear, before I consent to your marriage. It is a painful secret.

"You can tell me nothing wrong of Vincent," Rose said with conscious pride.

"Nothing that he has done which is wrong, but which he would be ashamed of.

"Is it necessary to tell me, uncle?" Rose asked with an expression of pain in her dark eyes.

Mr. Churchton answered her gravely:

"I have always resolved to tell the girl Vincent chose for his wife the history he had kept locked and barred, and that I had to know. I do not need to ask my Rose if she will trust it with me."

"No, uncle dear, but if there is nothing I can make easier for either, why not keep so sad a story from me?"

"Because, dear, upon a full comprehension of his past life depends the happiness of both of you depend," and with that he picked Rose up, and after settling her comfortably in a chair, he commenced pacing back and forth in front of her.

"I will not bother you with any more of my own history than is necessary to explain his. Suffice it to say that I once loved a girl, perhaps more than some men. At any rate, when she married another man it settled things for me. Poor little Cymbeline!"

For a moment silence reigned, then Mr. Churchton continued:

"If her choice had been a happy one I would have continued my course, and possibly forgotten, although I do not think so.

but she married a man in every way her inferior, although he came of an old and honored family. In less than six months I found that her life was miserable, and it nearly broke my heart to find it so. After a while her boy was born, and he gave her comfort from then on, but the father grew worse and worse. He never resorted to bodily violence, nor did he ever openly insult her, but wreaked his anger upon her in sarcastic speeches, couched in Chesterfieldian language. Indeed, so well did the mother guard her secret that the child never discovered that his father and mother were not on the best of terms. His life was one horrible orgy outside his home, and every indignity a wife could be given was her lot. When the baby was about thirteen he was stricken down with typhoid fever, and for weeks the little life was despaired of, and while the mother and child were thus fighting Death, the father met the dread monster and let it conquer him in another way."

Mr. Churchton paused and glanced at the girl. Rose was leaning forward, her lovely eyes fixed upon his face, scarcely stopping to breathe, so interested was she, and he continued:

"Yes, at the moment when his son was hanging, as it were, by a single thread over the brink of eternity, this man sent to his last account a man but poorly prepared for the change, in a squabble over some unworthy woman."

Once more he paused, but Rose's little hand motioned him to proceed.

"Then the distracted mother and wife sent for me. They had moved to a far Western city, and, going there, I took things in hand. At that time justice moved very rapidly in such localities, and before the boy was pronounced out of danger, the father had been sentenced to be hung."

The tender, pitiful face was now buried in the little hands, but Mr. Churchton resumed:

"I have always been a wealthy man, and I poured out my money like the proverbial stream of water to save him. In spite of all my efforts, however, I could only get the sentence commuted to the life penalty. Worn out with watching over her son, and agonized about her husband, poor Cymbeline died in my arms a week after her unworthy husband was incarcerated in the State penitentiary. I became the guardian of the motherless and worse than fatherless lad."

The girl's sobbing broke the silence of the room before Mr. Churchton laid his hand gently upon the bowed head.

"Rose, from that day forward, the son of the murderer has been like my own. I brought him to our home and gave him into the gentle hands of you two girls, and when Alex was added to our family circle I was glad, for he proved himself a worthy son of his mother, and with nothing of the father except his brilliant intellectuality. There has been a certain melancholy consciousness which I have tried to combat, which was the result of the years of his mother's suffering. Otherwise, he is as fine a man as can be found in our own great country. Just before we came abroad the father died; the past is gone forever. He was known for over years only as Prisoner No. 897, as the records of the State were destroyed by fire."

With a gentle tenderness Mr. Churchton drew up his tall, slender figure, and still continued:

"I have always wanted my boy to have the best of everything, and so I rejoice if he has won my Rose. Darling little girl, I have long hoped and fondly adored you, him, I divided my fortune with him. At that time I was worth ten millions. Five of it I invested for him, the other five for myself. Today we are both worth twenty millions. When I die, the twenty millions belonging to me will be divided between you four children. I think his fortune will come to him from his father's investments. That fact I believe did not weigh with you so ill. Now, Rose, you know my boy's story, what have you to say regarding it?" and there was deep entreaty in the man's voice.

The young head rose proudly, and although the beautiful face was stained with tears, it shone with love and unbridled enthusiasm.

"What have I to say, uncle? Why, that I never loved any one but Vincent; the other was a foolish sentimentalism. Of course we will keep the secret, and love him all the more to make up."

"But, Rose, are you not afraid of 'the sins of the fathers'?"

"Uncle, the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children of those who hate Him, but mercy is shown those who love and keep His commandments. If children only be properly reared they will grow up within the law, not without. Our Vio might have been different if it had not been for you, but as it is, he is one of whom we will have great cause to be proud, and we will never cease to love him, will we?" and as he gazed at the exquisite face, Mr. Churchton forgot all of all his blessings and treasures, Vincent Lyndstock would value most the love and appreciation of this woman, who with him was to solve not only to their satisfaction but that of many others the great problem of the "Joy of Living."

CHAPTER XVII.

"Love is the purest, grandest thing under God's heaven, and the deadliest weapon a woman's hand ever held."

As Alex was going to her own room after the exhausting interview with her uncle, Lillian called her, and, going to her, Rose saw her actress excited than ever before in their short lives.

"What is it?" she cried in astonishment.

"I am the most unhappy girl in the world," Lillian sobbed, and then with frequent breaks she told of the mysterious voice which had cursed both Vambrace and herself.

"What did he say?" Rose asked, too astonished for the moment to act promptly.

"That is just it, Rose. I wonder if he thinks I am a stupid little thing who has no sense?" she stormed, walking back and forth, her eyes looking black in their anger. "Did he disregard it?"

"No, he couldn't do that, but he will tell me nothing about her, and I want to know why she curses him and all who mate with him. I will not be cursed, Rose. Rosie, I am afraid," and Lillian caught her sister about the waist.

"Nonsense, Lilly! Probably it is some half-crazed woman. Naturally he thinks you ought to love Uncle in him enough to believe that he is good and true, and so you ought."

"But, Rosie, she cursed me."

"Suppose she did. Do you suppose that any woman can call down a curse on any one else? Only God can curse, and he does so only when we disobey Him in other way of punishing. Forget this silliness and be happy because you have won the love of a worthy gentleman man."

Lillian dimpled beautifully at the compliment, hiding her blushing face on Rose's shoulder.

"Isn't he the very dearest girl best thing in the world?"

"He is just the man suited to my Lily, and he only one I ever saw whom I was willing should marry you."

"Just isn't he the dearest and best?"

A sweet, uplifted expression came across Rose's face as she answered:

"Yes, dear, I think uncle has the most perfect character of any one I have ever known, and, naturally, next to him comes Vincent."

"Brother with your Vincent!" laughed Lillian, then, remembering Rose's confession, she cried

"It everything all settled?"

"We are going to be married," Rose answered quietly, but was jerked off her feet and whirled about the room.

"When?"

"That has not been spoken of yet."

"We must be married together the day we are eighteen. Quinton says he won't wait that long, but it will take me that long to get our clothes."

"Clothes?" Rose asked, looking slightly dazed.

"Why, of course, clothes! We can't be married in the clothes we have on, silly," and then the two sisters kissed each other very gravely.

More worried than he cared to confess, Vambrace was walking along Queen's Row, Carnival, and, making and repairing things in his active brain, when he was jolted by Quinton and Alex, both of whom appeared unusually happy.

"Hello, old man!" Alex asked, his eyes dancing with fun, and before either consent or negation could be given, he blurted out: "Rose's man, Rose and the boy are going to tie up, too, and the reason Vincent and Quinton are coming to you is we are trying to fool Rose and——" But before he could finish, Vambrace clasped Vincent by the hand, saying heartily:

"No mere words will express my sincere happiness over this," to which Vincent replied:

"I think both of us have been highly favored."

"I'm the only one left out in the cold," chimed in Alex, "and I started out that I had Rose as a chum, but blest to Moses! if she didn't go and grow up all of a sudden, and here I am stranded," and he groaned dismally, then continued:

"I really think my hearty broke to pieces, I say let's have some chow," and all three burst out laughing.

An hour later, as they came sauntering home, Mr. Churchton hurried to meet them, and, greeting them with joy, he cried:

"The girls!" came from three throats.

"Lillian and Rose. They are out in chairs, so the one amah says."

"The girls went out in chairs!" Vambrace cried, his face whitening.

"Yes," Mr. Churchton continued. "This amah, Sloey amah, says a message of some kind was brought to Lilly, and that after reading it she insisted that Rose go with her, saying she would go alone otherwise."

"Where is the girl?" Vincent cried, all the life and spirit gone from his voice.

"Yes, and where is Mrs. Humphries?" Alex cried.

"Come inside," Vambrace suggested, and in a few minutes Vincent and Mrs. Humphries were confronting four very angry men. The amah had told but the cold Mr. Churchton, who then turned to Mrs. Humphries.

"And you, Madam, that you are in your room and my nieces out alone near sundown in this foreign city, I be asked, sternly.

"I told her to go there, uncle," Vincent broke in, his face set and stern. "I came across some information which made me believe her unfit to be left with you, and I intended talking the matter over with you tonight."

"Where is Lilly's amah?" Vambrace cried.

The other man ventured the information that she thought the woman had obtained leave of absence to go to Canton to pray at the tomb of her ancestors.

"She's no Cantonese," Vambrace cried. "There must be some plot. God! think of Lilly and Rose in the hands of a band of cooties! Here, you!" fiercely to the amah, who, while she looked frightened, showed his look and did not quail when he spoke to her rapidly and angrily in her native tongue.

"She knows nothing," he finally said, almost in despair.

Mrs. Humphries, do you know anything?" Mr. Churchton asked quietly.

Before she could answer, Vincent said firmly:

"I know she does. Uncle, we must start out and talk this matter over. I will guard her so she cannot escape. Through her, I believe our darlings have gone into danger."

"But, Vincent, remember she is a woman."

The young man turned fiercely.

"I do remember. Uncle, there is no more terrible demon than a scorned woman," and Vambrace added:

"You never said a truer word than that. But now to our girls," when Alex cried:

"While you have been talking here, I've been downstairs; the girls went in chairs just at sundown toward Happy Valley," and the others sighed with relief, for here at least was a beginning.

"God grant that we will soon overtake them," Vincent cried, and Vambrace half whispered:

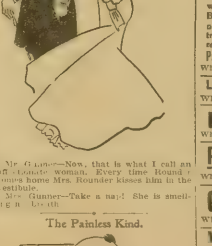
"How long will it be, I wonder, before I see Lillian?" then gave a cry of terror, for from the further corner of the room came the muffled voice of the parrot:

"Forever and Ever."

This charming story of life and love in the far East will be continued in next week's issue of the Ledger. Each person sending in a subscription to this paper is entitled to our free coupons and patterns as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Mr. Gunner—Now, that is what I call an affectionate woman. Every time Round comes home Mrs. Rounder kisses him in the vestibule.

Mr. Gunner—Take a nap! She is smelling Lysol.



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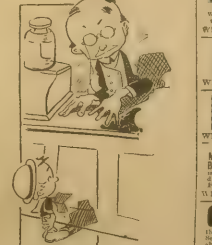
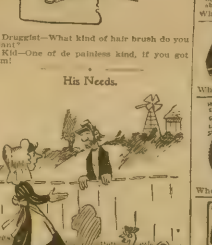
Kid—One of de painless kind, if you got 'em!



His Needs.



Gritty George—Ah, lady, could yer spare a poor man some change to git a fur cup an' a pair o' mits? I'm goin' to the Pole, I am.

The Lady—Gracious! It ain't so cold in St. Louis.

Gritty George—Jes, mum; but I'm goin' in a refrigerator car.

"Now I Hear You."

Father O'Halloran had a telephone put into the parsonage in connection with the church, the parochial school, etc. Patrick McFoe, his reverence's handy man, was instructed in the use of the instrument, and it was only the next day when Pat, dusting out the church, heard the clatter of the telephone bell. Taking down the receiver, he was pleased to hear Father O'Halloran's familiar voice asking him something or other about his work. Pat, in essaying to answer, remembered that his reverence was a long way off, and Pat consequently hollered into the transmitter at the top of his voice. "I don't understand you, Father," said the telephone. Pat tried again, with no better success. On his third trial he came near splitting the telephone, but accompanied by a gathering breath for a fourth blast he couldn't refrain from soliloquizing in a low tone, "Ah! may the divil fly away wid the thing!" Then he put dropped the telephone like a hot potato and left to his knowledge in future, when his beard Father O'Halloran's voice once again, "Now I hear you perfectly, Patrick."

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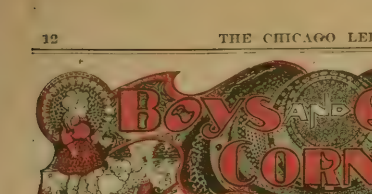

The Young Castaways;

OR—MAROONED ON A SAND-KEY.

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE.

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CHAPTER XIX.

WELL WON.

History repeats itself, they say, and surely it seemed as though it did so in this case; for the old story of the Spanish armada starting out to overwhelm the English fleet was coming on a small scale when Da Gama and his band each mounted a log which was to serve in lieu of a boat, and with rough paddles ventured upon the bosom of the bay, heading in the quarter where they judged their sloop, together with her smaller attendant craft, lay anchored.

No doubt the spectacle would have been highly entertaining could one have looked upon it by daylight, for sailors that they were the air chase stands, or their logs pretty much after the fashion of so many tricky horses; and would one know the clumsy Jack is when he attempts to navigate ashore on the back of four-footed description.

Still, the main thing was to make progress and this they did with such fearful haste, failing to luck that any splash made in the manipulation of their crude craft could be heard, be laid at the door of the frisky mullet in the shallows.

The English fleet lay in darkness, but as the sloop was painted white, her location would be betrayed when they arrived within a certain distance of her anchorage.

Da Gama proved herself no mean commander when it came to strategy, for he had arranged matters with his men, whereby they could concentrate their full force upon the sloop, which appeared to be the object of their ambition.

If the watch aboard the sponger saw the moving logs at all he possibly considered them as beneath his notice, believing them to be some species of fish or aquatic reptile such as alligators, for no alarm or cause of warning until the logs had been pushed up alongside.

His sudden shout of discovery rang over the water, and was immediately followed by a roar from the leathern lungs of Da Gama, as he dipped his paddle in deeply and sent his unique craft slam bang against the side of the sloop.

That was a warm time afloat, with six lusty fellows bellowing as they attempted to board the boat, and three equally determined others trying their best to prevent such an accomplishment.

No wonder Teddy woke up suddenly and scrambled to his feet, under the impression that he was a Turk at the time Rosaria and his valiant Greeks fell upon the sleeping camp.

He snatched up the pole and stood on the defensive, really believing the attack was intended for them.

"Push over to help Bravo!" shouted Maro, on the spur of the moment.

It would have been natural for them to have considered that the affair was none of their business, and that we remained passive spectators while it was being decided one way or the other; both of them had settled this matter when talking over the possibilities ahead, and it was decided that should their companions be the objects of Da Gama's attack, it would be their duty to lend a hand.

Teddy pushed for all he was worth, and by degrees the cedar boat progressed forward the other, around which the fighting was going on.

They were having a high old time of it, judging from the tremendous amount of splashing and shouting that served to make things lively; but it was of course impossible to tell which side seemed to be getting the upper hand.

Maro had stood there in the bow of the Loon, holding his gun in readiness for immediate use, but unwilling to fire while the chances of hitting friends was equal to that of disabling foes.

It seemed really too bad that these fellows should be engaging in this miserable warfare, when, as comrades in misfortune they should have combined their energies with the one idea of working out their salvation, by reaching some friendly port; yet such is the pugnacious nature of their class that they could engage in this bitter feud even while facing distressing conditions.

Maro was simply disgusted, but he knew that so long as Da Gama controlled the other side nothing could be done to bring about peace.

He strained his hearing, hoping to discover how the affair was proceeding, so that they might govern their own actions accordingly. If Bravo and his fellows were already overcome, it would be the height of folly for the two boys to attempt a rescue, and under such conditions the best they could do would be to sheer off and escape while the getting was good.

As the roar of battle continued unabated, he was forced to believe that Bravo managed to hold his own, and this inclined him to allow Teddy to keep up his efforts with the setting-pole.

They were now close upon the scene of strife, and Maro could begin to make out something of what was taking place upon the deck of the white sponger. He could see that those who had come from the water, like mad this way and that, making vicious jabs at the would-be boarders, who, knocked again and again into the water, only continued to clamber up again, dripping with brine, in the endeavor to effect a permanent lodgment on the deck.

Salt water evidently had little terror for them, now that their fighting blood had been aroused, and they took these manoeuvres as a part of the game, hoping sooner or later to weary those who did the pushing and forcing their unwelcome presence on board.

This was the condition of things when our boys came upon the scene.

Maro did not dare use his gun, for at such a short distance the effect would be as serious as the discharge of a cannon; and Teddy had enough to do to keep the boat on some of the later years of his existence, he certainly did not wish to take human life if it could be possibly avoided.

When Maro, too, found himself with a pole and began to slash the water at a furious rate, intending to ruin his blows when he discovered that he was not alone, another push from the energetic Teddy shortened the distance between the two boats.

In this respect he could not experience any scruples, since these men certainly deserved all that was coming to them.

When Maro, too, made his concerted action they created something of a little panic among the ranks of the would-be sloop buccaneers, who speedily deserted that side of the sloop for the other, where they might at least expect no blows from one quarter.

How the affair might have worked out had matters remained in that condition it would be hard to say, since both sides were blessed with a certain fighting ability to distribute. It changed, however, that new elements cropped up to change the situation.

Bravo was first to discover the

the sloop, and every member of her crew was now on deck, ready to join in the fight for life.

So another day passed.

They saw the approach of a second night with more or less apprehension, for who could tell what its hours of gloom might have in store for them? Bad as it was to fight the storm-king while daylight lasted, it was far more desperate under the canopy of night, when a pall hid everything from view, and eternal vigilance was the price of safety.

It was a bad night for them all, and our boys were not apt to soon forget, even though a number of like experiences had of late been crowded upon them. The wind held high carnival hour after hour and the sea grew absolutely fearful in its toppling waves, that appeared to tower above the little vessel as though threatening to crush her under the weight of their displeasure; yet she was a splendid seaworthy boat, and threw the tons upon tons of green water from her as she rose again, just as a Newfoundland dog would shake the drops from his hide upon emerging from the river.

With joy they greeted the first streaks of dawn, hoping its coming would bring them some new reason for hope, since the terror of darkness was wearing upon them fearfully.

And what a shout went up as Teddy made the discovery that they were within sight not only of land, but of a harbor where ships rode out the storm!

And what a thrill of delight the boys experienced when their eyes once more beheld the blessed stars and stripes of Old Glory floating in the breeze over the ramparts of San Juan, once a stronghold of Spanish power in the West Indies, but now an outlying section of the great Republic to the north!

Truly their long series of troubles must

On the Indian River.

be at an end, and they could cast anchor in peaceful waters.

The trials and tribulations of the past faded from their minds, and they remembered only that the future held out hope.

It mattered little to Bravo where he turned up, since he still held possession of his sloop, and could engage in his favorite business, next to treasure-seeking, that of hunting sponges for the market.

As to the men who had been left on the island, the skipper bothered his head not a whit, and so far as he was concerned they might have lived the balance of their lives in seclusion.

Maro had not been brought up that way, and felt it to be his duty to report the circumstances to the proper authorities at his first opportunity, leaving to them the task of attempting the rescue of the marooned ones.

The boys went ashore at the very first chance, for they were naturally eager to see what sort of a place the capital of Porto Rico might be. Both had heard much about its attractions, but this was not seeing for themselves.

And it was fine to step on solid ground, with the knowledge that the comforts of civilization surrounded one, that for an exchange of coin he could secure almost anything imaginable in the way of food.

Perhaps it is only natural, and certainly excusable, that shipwrecked mariners, upon finding themselves in a port of safety, should allow their thoughts to dwell principally upon the delights of satisfying the appetite, since custom has made civilized man a slave to the good things of the table.

Luckily Teddy was well supplied with money, which he had sewed in the lining of his coat, and the presence of which was never for a moment suspected by those rough companions of his adventurous cruise; else it might have tempted Da Gama as a means of partially satisfying the disappointment caused by his failure to unearth treasure.

Teddy was liberal to the tips of his fingers and insisted on his chum sharing his possessions.

They left the Loon in the hands of a native boatman, who guaranteed to make the little craft as good as new inside of two days; and Teddy was already laying out a campaign for himself and friend along the Indian River section of coast-wise Florida, when the cedar boat that had already served the Canadian lad so faithfully in his long cruise from the land of ice and snow would be their home for some months.

It had been arranged that Maro should not notify his uncle concerning his escape from the sea. He could lie low all winter, and when the approach of warm weather drove the boys north it would be time enough then to surprise Uncle Simon, who would no doubt be vastly pleased to learn that his bugbear of a scapegrace nephew had survived to remain a stumbling block between himself and that rich property which he coveted.

The fruit to be purchased, as well as the beef from which they had been deprived so long—how they gloried in these things! Why, the earth seemed beautiful enough to be called a paradise, and they felt at peace with all men.

Before night set in Maro was made the recipient of a shock that took away some of the pleasure of living, and he realized that after all this old world may seem very small. This condition of mind resulted from an accidental meeting on the plaza with a man whom he had good reason to remember, being none other than Captain Clawson, of the ill-fated Nancy Lee.

Apparently the boats had managed to run across some rescuing craft, and eventually the evil skipper had turned up in San Juan, where he might be taking life easy while waiting to receive a remittance from that same artful schemer, Uncle Simon.

Of the two the sailor was certainly the more astonished, for he had not the least idea in the world that the boy was in the land of the living, after his miserable trick of locking him in his stateroom on board the supposed sinking vessel.

He turned a sickly color, and his eyes seemed to fairly pop out of their sockets, for all mariners are inclined toward superstition, and Clawson was no exception. Had Maro made any extraordinary manifestation, such as spirits are supposed to show, the other would probably have turned and fled from the spot; but Maro had no idea of playing ghost, and turned a very indignant face upon his old enemy.

"Well," he said, looking the other in the eye, "this is a more agreeable meeting than our last one, Captain. Don't think I'm a ghost come to haunt you. The old Nancy Lee didn't go down as soon as you calculated when you bored those holes in her bottom in order to get the insurance money, and you see I managed to escape."

Captain Clawson tried to brave it out, as his best resort.

"Boy, I'm mighty g lad to see you. I've been sorry ever since that I let the men hurry me into that boat, without casting around to find what had become of you. That's gospel truth I'm tellin' whether you believe it or not. And as to my borin' holes, you're mistaken, Maro. I ain't that kind of man. I'm just a-waitin' for your uncle to send money to get us home; and if so be I can do anything for you, say the word."

Though he spoke so smoothly Maro was not in the least deceived, for he knew the skipper of old, and seeing the glitter in his eye that told of slumbering passion, knew how Clawson would be only too well pleased to find an opportunity in the near future whereby he could in some other way carry out his instructions from the man to whom he had sold himself, soul and body.

"I ask no favors from you, and I want to see nothing more of you. If you trouble me the least bit, I've arranged to tell my whole story to the Governor, who will find a place for such as you. So, on the whole, it would be wise for you to sheer off and leave me alone. If you do I promise not to bother you—that's all."

Then Maro turned his back deliberately on the old tar, and stalked away, leaving an angry man on the square.

Perhaps he may have taken the wisest course to tie the hands of the skipper, who had a certain amount of respect for the law. But should the occasion ever arise to give the late captain of the Nancy Lee another chance to do him an ill turn, he was in a humor to put his whole soul into the work; for to be treated so contemptuously by a mere boy, and one whom he had abused on board ship at that, was galling to the old sailor's pride.

When Teddy heard about the encounter he was uneasy, for he had come to feel very warmly toward this new-found chum, and would have experienced considerable distress should anything have happened to Maro. He fancied that the captain would plan evil things, and that the sooner they got away from San Juan the better.

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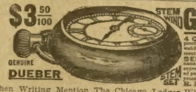

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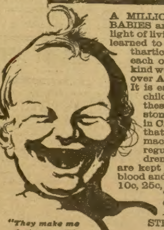

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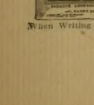

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A MILD HINT.

He—They say the Japanese never kiss.
She—That reminds me that I wanted to ask you something.
He—What is it?
She—I wanted to ask you if you had any Japanese blood in your veins.

A PEASANT HERO.

BY DAVID KER.

It was a fine summer evening, many years ago, when an old man sat at the door of his little cabin on the wild skirts of northern Russia, watching his children at their play, and thanking God in his heart that the cruel wars were over at last, and that fire, and hunger, and bloodshed, could no longer run riot on Russian ground. For the Poles, who had burned Moscow and slaughtered the people who held it, were driven out at last, and Michael Feodorvitch, the first of the House of Romanoff, sat upon the throne of the Czars.

But as he sat there, with the green waving woods outspread around him in the glory of the sunset, a cloud of dust began to rise in the distance, from which there broke at times a bright gleam like the flash of steel, and a band of twelve horsemen came riding toward him, lance in hand and sabre at side.

It was a startling sight for the unarmed peasant, for in that place, and at that time, any stranger might well be an enemy; but Ivan Susanin was not a man to flinch. And, indeed, the newcomers seemed to mean him no harm: for they waved their caps to him as they came up, and their leader said, in a smooth tone:

"Are you a Russian, good father, and a friend to the Czar?"

"I am a Russian, and every true Russian is the Czar's friend."

"You are the man we want, then. We are Cossacks from the south, who have heard the Czar's call, and have come to offer him our services. Can you tell us where we may find him?"

The man spoke frankly and pleasantly enough, but there was something in his look and voice from which the loyal Russian shrank instinctively. The strangers spoke the Russian correctly, and he and his comrades were in full Cossack dress, and mounted on Cossack horses; but Susanin had seen enough treachery in those evil days to make him very careful of trusting any one too far. While he was hesitating, one of the handsomest horses stumbled, and the rider swore a fierce oath at which Susanin knew to be Polish.

In a moment he had seen it all. These pretended Cossacks were Polish assassins, and were, perhaps, some of Czar soldiers, and then kill him as soon as a favorable chance offered. Should he refuse them the information they asked for, they would obtain it elsewhere, and there were too few men in the little village to cope with them by open force, well armed and mounted as they were. There was but one resource left—to pretend to believe their story, offer himself as their guide, lead them astray, and save, by his own death, the Czar and all Russia. In less time than it takes to write it, the peasant's resolution was taken.

"Welcome, brothers!" cried he, heartily. "You have come just at the right time. The Czar is at Yuroslavl, not twenty miles off, and right glad I shall be to guide you thither; but first step in and eat a bit, for you must need food after your journey."

The hungry Poles readily assented; but as they crowded into the hut, Susanin whispered something in the ear of his eldest son, a stout lad of sixteen, who slipped quietly away behind the hut, and then darted off into the forest as fast as his nimble feet could carry him.

Meanwhile, the father set himself to entertain his guests, laughing and jesting with the men whose words would (on his well knew) be drinking his lifeblood a few hours later. The keenest spectator could have read no suspicion in his clear, bright eye and ringing laugh; and when he at length gave the signal to get to horse, the Poles were one and all ready to pronounce their new acquaintance the best company in the world.

Onward they rode through the darkening forest, Susanin tramping steadily beside the leader's horse, and throwing in a word of guidance every now and then, till at length the light began to fail altogether, and then Ivan called a halt.

"This path is none of the safest in the dark, brothers," said he; "and we shall hardly serve the Czar by breaking our necks. Let us rest for an hour or two, and when the moon rises, we can go on again as fast as we like."

The Poles, tired with their long ride, readily agreed, and were soon fast asleep. Susanin might now have escaped with ease; but that would have left his task undone, and he never wavered for a moment.

But there was no sadness in the brave heart's heart, as he lay watching through the weary hours of his last night on earth. He knew that he must die, but he knew, also, that his death would be the deliverance of his native Russia, and the ruler whom she had chosen. And there, in the silence of midnight, with his enemies around him, and no sound but the sighing of the wind through the black depths of the forest, the self-doomed martyr prayed his last prayer to God, and then fell asleep as peacefully as a child.

He recovered his whole party were on their way once more; but this haste profited them little, for, as day broke, they found themselves entangled in a gloomy gorge, covered with impenetrable thickets; and when they looked round for the path by which they had entered, lo! it had utterly vanished. They were in a trap, and no outlet was to be seen.

"Traitor!" roared the leader, fiercely clutching his sword hilt, "you have betrayed us!"

"Have you only just found that out?" retorted Susanin, with a defiant laugh. "Did you think that God would send His blessing upon murder and treachery, or that our father, the Czar, could ever be betrayed by his own children? Kill me, if you will—it won't help you to find your way out of this trap, or to escape the Russian horsemen from Yaroslavl, to whom a post went last night. My work is done, God save the Czar!"

He had hardly spoken when he lay dead; but his words were quickly fulfilled. The murderers, entangling themselves in the dismal labyrinth into which he had led them, were speedily overtaken and slain; and the Czar himself, marching joyfully in the dismal labyrinth into which he had led them, were speedily overtaken and slain; and the Czar himself, marching joyfully in the dismal body when it was borne to the grave. And to this day, the men of Susanin's native town point with pride to the statue in peasant dress that stands in their market place, and tell the traveler that this is the man who gave his life for the Czar.

About Ants.

One of the most interesting observations made in ant life, says Andrew Wilson, the scientist, was the discovery that a certain red ant has evolved the habit of wet-spinning. The ways of this species were noted in the botanic gardens at Peradeniya, Ceylon, by E. G. Green. The extraordinary part of the story is that these ants used larvae as their spinning machines, the larvae employing their silk threads, used to make the cocoons, as their sewing machines. Mr. Green took some leaves which had been sewed together by the ants and unfastened the stitches. The separated edges were drawn together by the ants and then an hour afterward the larvae or grubs, held in the mouths of the ants, were seen to be passed backward and forward across the gaps made in the leaves. The movements of the grubs were duly directed by the ants and the silk threads spun by the mouths of the larvae soon repaired the defects in the leaves.

An ant nest or colony arises from eggs laid by one or more "queens." The developing young are attended by the workers' nesters, or "workers." The maggots, or larval ants, are fed by them, often "crammed out of the nurses' mouths, and are also carefully watched in respect of the temperature and other conditions of the nurseries as are infantile human beings. When full development occurs the pupae change into ants, which are either winged or wingless. The latter are the "neuters" or workers. They may develop big jaws and appear as the "soldiers" of the colony. Those which are winged are the females or new colonies. They are of both sexes and they produce the eggs whence the new colonies will be evolved.

Slavemaking is another trait of ant life which has attracted much attention. It is practiced by different species, and while in some cases the slaves, belonging to different groups from their masters, perform the ordinary duties of the nest, acting as servitors, in other cases there is a complete dependence of the owners on the slaves. One ant, noted by Huber in 1810, was shown to be in danger of actual starvation unless fed by the slaves. A British species of slave-making ant is not dependent upon them. It, however, carries off the pupae from the nests of the ants on which it makes its forays and the strange ants born in the nest of the conqueror take up menial duties.

Probably Right.

Granddaughter—Mrs. Pinetalk doesn't say "punkin" pie; she says "pumpkin."

Old Lady—She does, does she? I'll bet a cookie she doesn't know how to make one fit to eat.

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Valuable Prescription by Which Any Man Can Make His Own Remedy to Cure Himself at Home. Sent Free to All. Write for It.

WILL MAKE A MAN OF YOU.

For the return of that youthful feeling of manhood a prominent Detroit physician and savant is in possession of a receipt which he has himself used in his own extensive

private practice with the most startling success, though he never knew a failure. He says he has never found a single case that could resist it, and he thought about making it public, but decided to let the doctor willingly sends the formula entirely free to all men who write him for it, and they will find it a gift of lasting value. It is a home treatment, and will cure lost vitality, nervousness, weak back, emissions, varicocele, lack of nerve force, sleepless nights, lassitude, inability and the many other accompanying conditions that bring the sexually imperfect man. It creates an increase in development, both size and power nature, forces active blood to the muscular tissue, tones the nervous system and makes bodily confidence. It makes the man of 65 as good as the man of 25 years ago, and restores the lost vitality and fit for marriage and parenthood. Satisfactory results are produced in a few days, a perfect cure in a few weeks, regardless of age, or disorder or weakness.

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Cautious.

He (aside)—Ah, how I loves to be wid her—an' den de awful thought dat dis is leap year comes up an' spoils me day!

Making Money.

Birmingham, England, has a mint which in addition to turning out millions of English money does more in the way of supplying foreign governments with coin than any other money-making establishment in the world. A few days ago it shipped the first instalment of a huge Egyptian order for 10,000,000 piasters. The consignment weighed five tons, was conveyed in sixty cases and valued at $15,000,000. For well over a century Birmingham has taken the lead in this literal kind of money-making. As far back as 1797 one firm coined under contract for the British Government 4,000 tons of copper coin, valued at about $4,000,000. Among the countries and governments which have gone time after time to Birmingham for their money are India, Tunis, Canada, Turkey, China, Hongkong, Haiti, Sarawak, Tuscany, Venezuela and Chile.

In some instances, notably in that of China, the coins were not made in Birmingham. As a matter of fact, no Chinese coin has, so far as I know, been made outside the celestial empire. The pride and prejudice of the Chinese have to be humored, so the firm sent out a complete plant with men to operate it, and the coins were struck in China. So clever is their eight separate plants have been sent out to China in this way.

For the new kingdom of Italy the same thing was done in 1862, 1,600 tons of "blanks" being shipped to furnish the raw material. Again, in Marseilles, when the re-establishment of the empire under Napoleon III. rendered necessary a new copper coinage, 750 tons of metal was in this way turned into money on French soil.

Killing His First Man.

The killing of a brother-man, even in battle, is a painful thing to remember. A soldier of the late war thus vividly describes his first experience:

"My first man I saw but twenty seconds, but I shall remember him forever. I was standing by my gun when a Confederate infantry soldier rushed up.

"I whipped out my revolver and took him through the breast. He tossed up his arms, gave me the strangest look in the world, and fell forward upon his face. He had blue eyes, brown curling hair, a dark mustache, and a handsome face.

"I thought the instant I fired that I should have loved that man if I had known him. I tell you this war is terrible business."

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REMEMBER, to avoid mistakes, you must first give the number of the Pattern wanted—second, do not fail to give bust measure for waist, or waist measure if skirt is desired. When you do as here stated we will not know what to send you. Also, do not fail to enclose money.

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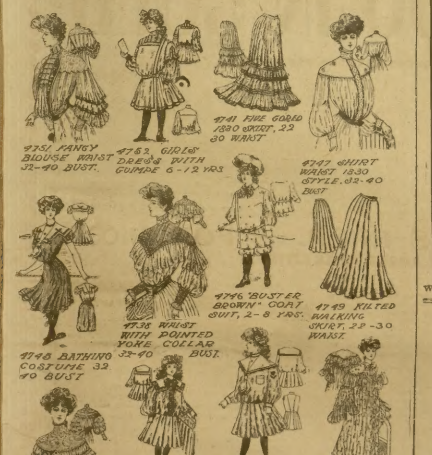

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4760 NEGLIGEE GOWN, 32-40 BUST
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4748 FANCY YOKES 32-36-40 BUST.
4753 BLOUSE WAIST WITH BOLERO 32-40 BUST
4756 NINE GORED SKIRT, 22-30 WAIST
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IF YOU CAN MAKE OUT THIS PUZZLE

15	21	18			
7	18	5	!	20	
16	21	26	26	12	5
15	6	6	5	18	

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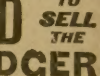

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Name.....
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The Mischievous Monkeys.

When I was at the zoo one day I heard a great screaming and chattering going on in the monkey house, and I went in to see what it was all about. In the big central cage were twenty-five or thirty monkeys of all sorts and sizes, rushing and darting around in every direction, over the floor, on the cross bars, in the swings and up the sides of the cage, and after them was a big gray headed ape, so mad that he looked as if he wanted to tear the whole lot to pieces. On one of the cross bars sat another ape, looking down at the scene as if he were enjoying the fun.

Presently the ape that was chasing the monkeys, being unable to catch any of them, climbed back to the cross bar and sat there chattering and snarling, while the excitement among the monkeys gradually subsided. As I turned to go away I saw the keeper and asked him what they had been doing. He smiled and said that if I would wait a little while I would see.

So I waited, and presently noticed that the two big apes on the bar had become quiet and were sitting close together, as if getting ready to take a nap. Their long tails were hanging down nearly to the floor of the cage, and several of the little monkeys were creeping around watching them, as if they were intent on mischief. Suddenly two of them darted forward, and each of them seized a tail and began swinging on it from side to side, just as a boy swings on a dangling rope.

The two old apes, furious at this impudent interference with their comfort, chattered and screamed and made faces at their tormentors, and tried to pull their tails away, but the little swingers held fast and the rest of the monkeys danced about the cage and fairly screamed with delight.

Presently one of the apes got his tail loose and rushed down from his perch, blazing with anger, to punish the monkey that had dared to take such a liberty with him. Then the other ape got his tail loose too, and for five minutes there was a scene in the cage that beggars description.

The keeper told me that this is one of the little monkeys' favorite amusements, and that they seem to enjoy it as much as boys enjoy their romps.

Positively Your Last Chance.

We have received so many letters from people all over the country expressing regret at not having entered our Contest when we offered our extra prizes for early estimates, that we have decided, in fairness to all, to offer

ANOTHER EXTRA PRIZE OF $5,000.00

This fortune in itself will be given to the party who estimates nearest to the correct number of people who will pay admission to the Great St. Louis World's Fair from the opening to the closing of his or her estimate is announced by the Contest Committee. May 1, 1904, and August 1, 1904, making $85,500.00 that we will pay to successful contestants.

You are interested in the Great World's Fair. You have seen something about it in every paper you have read for months past. Have you thought how many people will attend the Great Fair? The gates were thrown open on April 30th and multitudes of visitors from every part of the earth are paying admission into the grounds. At the Chicago World's Fair, 21,480,161 people paid admission into the grounds. At the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition, 8,206,850 people paid admission into the grounds. At the Omaha Exposition, 1,778,850 people paid admission into the grounds. **AT ST. LOUIS FAIR TOTAL PAID ADMISSIONS IN MAY 542028.**

Can you estimate how many people will pay admission into the grounds of the Great St. Louis World's Fair this year? If you can, a fortune is yours. Think it over. 1901 cash prizes will be paid to the 1901 men, women or children who can estimate **nearest** to the total number of people who will pay admission into the Fair Grounds from April 30, 1904, the opening date, to December 1, 1904, the closing date of the Great World's Fair. These prizes amount to

$85,500.00 IN GOLD

The largest prizes ever offered in any contest, and are divided as follows:

To the nearest correct estimate	$25,000.00
To the second nearest correct estimate	10,000.00
To the third nearest correct estimate	5,000.00
To the fourth nearest correct estimate	2,500.00
To the fifth nearest correct estimate	1,500.00
To the sixth nearest correct estimate	1,000.00
To the next 2 nearest correct estimates, $500 each	2,000.00
To the next 4 nearest correct estimates, $250 each	2,000.00
To the next 20 nearest correct estimates, $150 each	2,500.00
To the next 50 nearest correct estimates, $50 each	2,500.00
To the next 106 nearest correct estimates, $25 each	2,650.00
To the next 100 nearest correct estimates, $10 each	2,000.00
To the next 500 nearest correct estimates, $5 each	2,500.00
To the next 1,000 nearest correct estimates, $1 each	1,000.00
Supplementary prizes	26,000.00
Total	$85,500.00

This is purely an Educational Contest, undertaken to arouse interest in the greatest of all World's Fairs, and this Company is composed of leading Business Men, Merchants, Bankers, Publishers and Capitalists, who believe that an offer of these magnificent sums to prizes is the greatest method of advertising the World's Fair.

ESTIMATES 25 CENTS EACH. 5 FOR $1.00

LOWER RATES ON LARGER QUANTITIES.

For every estimate you are given a separate engraved and numbered certificate with coupon attached. These certificates will cost you 25 cents each, or 5 for $1.00. An investment of a small amount may mean your independent life. You have just as much chance as anyone else to win a fortune, and it is to your interest and to your family's to take advantage of the opportunity, as soon as possible.

You are not placing your orders with an unreliable concern. The money to cover our prizes is on deposit. See statement of one of the largest banks in the United States herewith. In entering a contest, this should be your first consideration. Know that the money to pay you is there. Then you can get it without delay or question as soon as the prizes are awarded.

After making this deposit of $75,000.00 we arranged for two extra prizes, one of $5,500.00, which expired with April 30, 1904, and the one of $5,000.00 referred to above and which is now offered to you. We are incorporated for $200,000.00 and our company is made up of the most influential business men and capitalists.

We cannot touch this money. It is held by the Missouri Trust Co. for no other purpose than to pay these prizes as soon as the committee on awards declares the successful contestants. This committee has no interest whatever in the contest, is made up of prominent citizens, all of who have agreed to award the prizes, and your estimates are turned over to this committee long before the prizes are awarded, so you have no anxiety or uncertainty from any source.

$5,000.00 EXTRA.

We offer this extra amount simply as a kind of consolation prize for those who failed to get chances in our other extra prizes, but any one may compete for it. It does not matter whether you send certificates and coupons or not, whether you have entered the Contest, or taken a chance in your life before, this extra prize is open to you and to every one. If you have never entered for an estimate, do so now, while there is this splendid special inducement. If you have certificates and coupons entitling you to chances in our other prizes, increase your chances of securing a fortune by purchasing certificates and coupons that will entitle you to chances in this extra prize. Only such estimates as are made on coupons purchased between May 1, 1904 and August 1, 1904 are to be considered in the awarding of this extra prize. Even though a contestant who entered the Contest before May 1, 1904, or will enter after August 1, 1904 makes a still nearer estimate than yours, his estimate will have no chance whatever in this particular prize.

If you should happen to miss this extra prize, your coupons BOUGHT NOW will still entitle you to the chance of winning one or more of the prizes which we will pay for nearest estimates made on the total paid attendance at the Fair and which amount to $75,000.00.

If you win this **extra prize** your estimate will also be considered in the awarding of the other grand prizes, making it possible for you to get $50,000.00 with one estimate.

WE DO NOT ASK YOU TO ESTIMATE NOW.

We will simply sell you the certificates with duplicate coupons attached, and allow you the privilege of filing in your own estimates on the certificates and coupons whenever you are ready, and of sending in the coupons to us on the very last day of the contest if you wish. That is, you do not have to make your estimate NOW, but you can reserve the certificates for future use. You do not know of the contest, when you will know what the total attendance is up to that date, then fill in your estimates and send the coupons to us just so they are received in our office by not later than October 15, 1904, the date on which the contest closes. The World's Fair opened April 30, 1904, and closes December 1, 1904, showing that the closing date of the contest is at least six weeks prior to the closing date of the Fair, insuring absolute fairness to every participant in the contest.

Is not this indeed a wonderful offer? Did you ever hear of a Contest where the conditions were so simple and the terms so liberal? Look carefully over the list of prizes, and you will readily see that if you have the first or second or even the third grand prize, you still have chances in nearly two thousand other handsome prizes, any one of which is well worth trying for.

Lower Rates on Larger Quantities. The small sum of 25 cents or $1.00 or even $5.00 is of little value in itself. Can you find a better place to invest so small an amount than here, where it may bring you an independent fortune? We will not make this offer again. This is positively **our last extra prize,** and positively the last chance that you will ever have to enter the Contest while the chances are so strong.

There are thousands of poor people in the world to-day who can attribute their limited circumstances to one little instance of neglect. This is probably the opportunity of your life. Are you going to let it slip by you? If you are, you will regret it to your dying day. The opportunity to get a nominal fortune is said at your door. Write to-day for full particulars. Don't think that "to-morrow will do as well." The habit of putting off till to-morrow grows on one, until the day comes when he or she realizes that the opportunity is gone forever, while the more thoughtful neighbor acts promptly and gains the fortune which might as well have been yours. An investment of 25 cents or $1.00 may mean that this fortune is yours. Write to-day.

THE WORLD'S FAIR CONTEST CO., 7150 DELMAR AVENUE, ST. LOUIS, MO.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.—Bear in mind That You Hold Your Own Certificates and Coupons and that you do not have to make your estimates or fill in the Certificates and Coupons and send the coupons to us until the very last day of the Contest if you so desire. Remember also that this is the last chance you will have to buy certificates and coupons to get a chance in the extra prize of $5,000.00 as this is positively the last extra prize that we will offer. Contestants are distinctly to understand that participation in this prize contest is not confined to subscribers for any one paper but that the contest is being advertised in a large number of other publications, the subscribers for all of which are privileged to compete and share in the distribution of the prizes offered.

MISSOURI TRUST COMPANY

CAPITAL $2,000,000

Bond $75,000.00

Certificate of Deposit No. 451

No. 90,1903.

This Certifies that, The World's Fair Contest Company, Incorporated, has this day deposited with this Company $75,000.00 in gold, for the purpose of the awards in the contest on the total paid attendance at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904, and that said deposit is held in trust by this Company to be paid by it to such successful contestants, as the Committee on awards may direct.

Missouri Trust Company of St. Louis,

By J. [illegible] Treasurer.